SCB #11,333
c.4

Thomas F. Torrance

Edwin Edwards
1654.

OF THE
PASTORAL CARE.

Imprimatur,

Maii 5. 1692. Jo. Cant.

Jn° Cooper

A DISCOURSE OF THE Pastoral Care.

Written

By the Right Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT, Lord Bishop of SARUM.

LONDON:

Printed by *R. R.* for Ric. Chiswell, at the *Rose* and *Crown* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard. MDCXCII.

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TO THE

QUEENS

Most Excellent MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,

THE Title of *Defender of the Faith*, is so inherent in the Royal Dignity, and so essential a part of its security as well as of its glory, that there was no need of Papal Bulls

to add it to the Crown that Your MAJESTY now wears: You hold it by a much better Tenure, as well as by a more ancient Poſſeſſion. Nor can one reflect on the Pope's giving it to King *Henry* the VIIIth, without remembring what is ſaid of *Caiaphas*, that *being High Prieſt that year, he Propheſied.* For ſince that time, the true Faith hath been ſo eminently Defended by our Princes, and that of both Sexes, we having had our *Pulcheria*'s as well as our *Conſtantine*'s and our *Theodoſe*'s, that this Church has been all along the chief ſtrength and

honour

honour of the Reformation, as well as the main Object of the envy and ſpite of thoſe of the *Roman* Communion.

But tho Your MAJESTY's Royal Anceſtors have done ſo much for us, there remains yet a great deal to be done for the compleating of our Reformation, eſpecially as to the Lives and Manners of men. This will moſt effectually be done by obliging the Clergy to be more exemplary in their Lives, and more diligent and faithful in the diſcharge of their Paſtoral Duty. And this Work ſeems to be reſerved for Your MAJE-

STIES, and deſigned to be the Felicity and Glory of Your Reign. To ſerve God by promoting this Great and Glorious Deſign, which is ſo truly worthy of Your MAJESTY's beſt care and endeavours, I have purpoſely written this Treatiſe, which I do with all humility Dedicate and preſent to Your Sacred MAJESTY.

May that God who is the King of kings, and hath bleſs'd us with Two ſuch Excellent Princes, preſerve You Both long to us, and make You as happy in us, as we are in You: May You Reign over

us

us till You have accompliſhed all thoſe Great Deſigns for which God hath raiſed You up, and with which He hath filled Your Hearts : And may this Church be made by Your means *the Perfection of Beauty*, and *the Joy of the whole Earth.*

Theſe are the daily and moſt fervent Prayers of,

May it pleaſe Your MAJESTY,

Your MAJESTY'S

Moſt Loyal, moſt Humble, and moſt Obedient Subject and Chaplain,

GI. SARUM.

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THE PREFACE.

THIS Subject, how Important ſoever in it ſelf, yet has been ſo little treated of, and will ſeem ſo ſevere in many parts of it, that if I had not judged this a neceſſary ſervice to the Church, which did more decently come from one, who, how undeſerving ſoever he is, yet is raiſed to a Poſt that may juſtify the writing on ſo tender a Head, I ſhould never have undertaken it. But my Zeal for the true Intereſts of Religion, and of this Church, determined me to ſet about it; yet ſince my Deſign is to correct things for

the future, rather than to reproach any for what is past, I have resolved to cast it rather into Advices and Rules, into plain and short Directions, than into long and laboured Discourses, supported by the shews of Learning, and Citations from Fathers, and Historical Observations; this being the more profitable, and the less invidious way of handling the Subject.

It ought to be no Imputation on a Church, if too many of those that are dedicated to her Service, have not all the Characters that are here set forth, and that are to be desired in Clergymen. Even in the Apostles days there were false Apostles, and false Teachers; as one of the Twelve was a Traytor, and had a Devil; some loved the pre-eminence, others loved this present World to a scandalous degree; some of those that preached Christ,

Christ, did it *not sincerely, but out of contention*; they vied with the Apostles, and hoped to have carried away the esteem from them, even while they were suffering for the Faith: for envying their Credit, they designed to raise their own Authority, by lessening the Apostles; and so hoped to have *added affliction to their bonds.* In the first and purest Ages of the Church we find great Complaints of the Neglects and Disorders of the Clergy of all Ranks. Many became the *Stewards* and *Bailiffs* of other Peoples Estates; and while they looked too diligently after those *Cares* which did not belong to them, they even in those times of trial, grew very remiss in the most *important* of all *Cares*, which was their proper business. 1. Phil. 16.

As soon as the Empire became Christian, the Authority, the Im-

munity, and the other Advantages, which by the bounty of Princes, followed the Sacred Functions, made them to be generally much desired; and the Elections being then for most part popular, (though in some of the greater Cities, the Magistracy took them into their hands, and the Bishops of the Province were the Judges both of the fitness of the Person, and of the regularity of the Election); these were managed with much faction and violence, which often ended in blood, and that to so great an excess, that if we had not Witnesses to many Instances of this among the best men in those Ages, it would look like an uncharitable Imputation on those Times, to think them capable of such Enormities. Indeed the Disorders, the Animosities, the going so oft backwards and forwards in the matters of Faith, as the

the Emperors happened to be of different Sides, are but too ample a proof of the Corruptions that had then got into the Church. And what can we think of the breach made in the Churches of *Africk* by *Donatus*, and his Followers, upon ſo inconſiderable a Point, as whether *Cecilian* and his *Ordainers* had denied the *Faith* in the laſt Perſecution, or not? which grew to that height, that almoſt in every Town of *Africk* there were divided Aſſemblies, and ſeparating Biſhops, upon that Account. Nor was this Wound healed but with the utter ruine of thoſe Churches. St. *Jerom*, though partial enough to his own ſide, as appears by his eſpouſing *Damaſus*'s Intereſts, notwithſtanding that vaſt effuſion of blood that had been at his Election; which was ſet on by him, and continued for four days with ſo much violence, that in one night,

and at one Church, a hundred and seven and thirty were killed; yet he could not hold from laying open the Corruptions of the Clergy in a very severe style. He grew so weary of them, and they of him, that he went and spent the rest of his days at *Bethlehem*.

Those Corruptions were so much the more remarkable, because the Eminent Men of those times, procured a great many Canons to be made, both in Provincial and General Councils, for correcting Abuses, as soon as they observed them creeping into the Church: but it is plain from St. *Chrysostom*'s Story, that tho bad men did not oppose the making good Rules, while they were so many dead Letters in their Registers; yet they could not bear the rigorous Execution of them: so that those good *Canons* do shew us indeed what were the growing Abu-

ses

ſes of the Times, in which they were made; and how good men ſet themſelves againſt them; but are no ſure indications of the Reformation that was effected by them.

The Tottering ſtate of the *Roman* Empire which had then fallen under a vaſt Diſſolution of Diſcipline and Manners, and coming into feeble hands, was then ſinking with its own weight, and was become on all ſides an eaſy Prey to its Invaders, who were either *Pagans* or *Arians*, ought to have awakened the Governours of the Church to have apprehended their approaching Ruin; to have prevented it by their Prayers and Endeavours; and to have corrected thoſe Abuſes which had provoked God, and weakned and diſtracted both Church and Empire. But if we may believe either *Gildas* here in *Britain*, or *Salvian* in *France*, they

rather grew worſe, more impenitent, and more inſenſible, when they ſaw the Judgments of God coming upon the Empire, Province after Province rent from it, and over-run by the *Barbarians*.

When that great Wound was in ſome ſort healed, and a Second Form of Chriſtianity roſe up and prevailed again in the *Weſtern* Parts, and the World became *Chriſtian* with the allay that dark and ſuperſtitious Ages had brought into that holy Doctrine: Then all the Rules of the former Ages were ſo totally forgotten, and laid aſide, that the Clergy univerſally loſt their eſteem: And tho' *Charles* the Great, and his Son, held a great many Councils for correcting theſe Abuſes, and publiſhed many *Capitulars* on the ſame deſign; yet all was to no purpoſe: There was neither Knowledge nor Vertue enough left to reform a Corruption

ruption that was become universal. The Clergy by these Disorders fell under a general Contempt, and out of that rose the Authority, as well as the Wealth of the *Monastick Orders*; and when Riches and Power had corrupted them, the *Begging Orders* took away the Credit from both; yet even their Reputation, which the outward severity of their Rule, Habit, and Manner of Life did both establish and maintain long, was at last so generally lost, that no Part or Body of the *Roman-Clergy* had Credit enough to stop the Progress of the *Reformation*; which was in a great measure occasion'd by the scorn and hatred that fell on them, and which was so spread over all the parts of *Europe*, that to it, even their own Historians do impute the great Advances that *Luther*'s Doctrine made for about Fifty Years together; whole Kingdoms

and

and Provinces embracing it as it were all of the ſudden.

It has now for above an Hundred Years made a full ſtand, and in moſt places it has rather loſt ground, than gained any. The true account of this is not eaſily given; the Doctrine is the ſame; and it has been of late defended with greater Advantages, with more Learning, and better Reaſoning than it was at firſt; yet with much leſs Succeſs. The true reaſon of the ſlackning of that Work, muſt be imputed to the Reformation made in ſeveral Points with relation to the Manners, and the Labours of the *Clergy*, by the *Church of Rome*, and the Depravation under which moſt of the *Reformed Churches* are fallen. For the Manners and the Labours of the Clergy, are real Arguments, which all people do both underſtand and feel; they have a much more convincing

vincing force, they are more visible, and perswade more universally, than Books can do, which are little read, and less considered: And indeed the Bulk of Mankind is so made, that there is no working on them, but by moving their Affections, and commanding their Esteem. It cannot be denied but that the Council of *Trent* established the Errors of Popery in such a manner, as to cut off all possibility of ever treating, or reuniting with them; since those *Decisions*, and their *Infallibility*, which is their Foundation, are now so twisted together, that they must stand and fall together: Yet they established such a Reformation in *Discipline*, as may make Churches that pretend to a more *Glorious Title*, justly ashamed. For tho, there are such Reserves made for the *Plenitude* of the *Papal Authority*, that in great instances, and for

for a Favourite, all may be broke through; yet the most notorious Abuses are so struck at, and this has been in many places so effectually observed, chiefly where they knew that their Deportment was looked into, and watched over by *Protestants*, that it must be acknowledged, that the cry of the Scandals of Religious Houses is much laid: And tho' there is still much Ignorance among their *Mass Priests*; yet their *Parish Priests* are generally another sort of men: They are well instructed in their Religion; lead regular Lives, and perform their Parochial Duties with a most wonderful diligence: They do not only say Mass, and the other publick Functions daily, but they are almost perpetually imploying themselves in the several parts of their Cures: Instructing the Youth, hearing Confessions, and visiting the

the Sick: and beſides all this, they are under the conſtant obligation of the *Breviary*: There is no ſuch thing as *Non-reſidence* or *Plurality*, to be heard of in whole Countries of that Communion; and though about Cathedrals, and in Greater Cities, the vaſt number of *Prieſts*, gives ſtill great and juſt occaſion to cenſure; yet the *Pariſh-Prieſts* have almoſt univerſally recovered the Eſteem of the People: They are no more diſpoſed to think ill of them, or to hearken to any thing that may give them a *juſt cauſe*, or at leaſt a *plauſible colour* for departing from them. So that the *Reformation* that *Popery* hath been forced to make, has in a great meaſure ſtopt the progreſs of the *Reformation* of the *Doctrine* and *Worſhip* that did ſo long carry every thing before it.

But this is the leaſt Melancholy part of the Account that may be given

ven of this matter. The *Reformers* began that bleſſed Work with much Zeal; they and their firſt Succeſſors carried it on with Learning and Spirit: They were active in their Endeavours, and conſtant and patient in their Sufferings; and theſe things turn'd the eſteem of the world, which was alienated from *Popery*, by the Ignorance and Scandals of the *Clergy*, all towards them: But when they felt the warmth of the Protection and Encouragement that Princes and States gave them, they inſenſibly ſlackned; They fell from their *Firſt Heat* and *Love*; they began to build Houſes for themſelves, and their Families, and neglected the *Houſe of God*: They reſted ſatisfied with their having reformed the Doctrine and Worſhip; but did not ſtudy to reform the Lives and Manners of their People: And while in their *Offices* they lamented the not having

having a *Publick Diſcipline* in the Church, as it was in the Primitive Times; They have either made no attempts at all, or at leaſt very faint ones for reſtoring it. And thus, while *Popery* has purified it ſelf from many former Abuſes, *Reformed Churches* have added new ones to the old, that they ſtill retain, and are fond of. Zeal in Devotion, and Diligence in the *Paſtoral Care*, are fallen under too viſible and too ſcandalous a decay. And whereas the underſtanding of the Scriptures, and an Application to that Sacred Study, was at firſt the diſtinguiſhing Character of *Proteſtants*, for which they were generally nicknamed *Goſpellers*; Theſe *Holy Writings* are now ſo little ſtudied, that ſuch as are obliged to look narrowly into the matter, find great cauſe of regret and lamentation, from the groſs Ignorance of ſuch as either are in Orders,

or

or that pretend to be put in them.

But the most Capital and Comprehensive of all Abuses, is, That the false Opinion of the worst Ages of Popery, that made the chief, if not the only obligation of *Priests* to be the performing *Offices*; and judged, that if these were done, the chief part of their Business was also done, by which the *Pastoral Care* came to be in a great measure neglected, does continue still to leaven us: While men imagine that their whole work consists in Publick *Functions*, and so reckon, that if they either do these themselves, or procure and hire another person in *Holy Orders* to do them, that then they answer the *Obligation* that lies on them: And thus the *Pastoral Care*, the Instructing, the Exhorting, the Admonishing and Reproving, the directing and conducting, the visiting and comforting the People of the Parish, is generally

ly neglected: while the Incumbent does not think fit to look after it, and the Curate thinks himself bound to nothing but barely to perform Offices according to agreement.

It is chiefly on design to raise the sense of the Obligations of the Clergy to the Duties of the *Pastoral Care*, that this Book is written. Many things do concur in our present Circumstances, to awaken us of the *Clergy*, to mind and do our duty with more zeal and application than ever. It is very visible that in this present Age, the Reformation is not only at a stand, but is going back, and grows sensibly weaker and weaker. Some Churches have been plucked up by the roots; and brought under a total desolation and dispersion; and others have fallen under terrible oppressions and shakings. We have seen a Design formed and carried on long, for the

utter deſtruction of that *Great Work.* The Clouds were ſo thick gathered over us, that we ſaw we were marked out for deſtruction: And when that was once compaſſed, our Enemies ſaw well enough, that the reſt of their Deſigns would be more eaſily brought about. It is true, our Enemies intended to ſet us one upon another by turns, to make us do half their work; and to have ſtill an abuſed Party among us ready to carry on their Ends; for they thought it too bold an Attempt, to fall upon all at once; but while they were thus ſhifting Hands, it pleaſed God to cut them ſhort in their Deſigns; and to blaſt that part of them in which we were concerned, ſo entirely, that now they carry them on more barefacedly: and drive at *Conqueſt*, which is at one ſtroke to deſtroy our *Church* and *Religion*, our *Laws* and our *Properties*.

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In this critical ſtate of things, we ought not only to look at the Inſtruments of the Calamities that have fallen ſo heavily on ſo many Proteſtant Churches, and of the Dangers that hang over the reſt; but we ought chiefly to look up to that God, who ſeems to be provoked at the whole Reformation; becauſe they have not walked ſuitably to the Light that they have ſo long enjoyed, and the Bleſſings which had *been* ſo long continued to them; but have corrupted their ways before him. They have loſt the *Power of Religion*, while they have ſeemed to magnify the *Form* of it, and have been zealous for Opinions and Cuſtoms; and therefore God has in his *wrath*, taken even that *Form* from them, and has loathed their *Solemn Aſſemblies*; and brought them under a *famine of the Word of the Lord*, which they had ſo much deſpiſed.

While these things are so, and while we find that we our selves, are as a *brand pluck'd out of the fire*, which may be thrown back into it again, if we are not allarmed by the just, but unsearchable Judgments of God, which have wasted other Churches so terribly, while they have only frighted us; what is more evident, than that the present state of things, and the *signs of the times*, call aloud upon the whole Nation to bring forth *fruits meet for repentance? since the ax is laid to the root of the tree.* And as this indeed concerns the body of the Nation, so we who are the *Priests and Ministers of the Lord*, are under more particular Obligations, first to look into our own ways, and to reform whatsoever is amiss among us, and then to be Intercessors for the People, committed to our Charge: to be mourning for their Sins, and by our

our ſecret Faſtings and Prayers, to be ſtanding in thoſe Breaches which our crying Abominations have made: and ſo to be averting thoſe Judgments, which may be ready to break in upon us; and chiefly to be *lifting up our voices like Trumpets, to ſhew our people their tranſgreſſions.* To be giving them faithful *warning*, from which we may expect this bleſſed ſucceſs, that we may at leaſt gain upon ſuch a number, that for their ſakes, *God, who will not ſlay the righteous with the wicked*, may be yet entreated for our ſins; and that the Judgments which hang over us, being quite diſſipated, his Goſpel, together with Peace and Plenty, may ſtill dwell among us, and may ſhine from us, with happy Influences to all the ends of the Earth. And even ſuch Paſtors as ſhall faithfully do their duty, but without any ſucceſs, may depend upon

this, that they ſhall *ſave their own ſouls*; and ſhall have a diſtinguiſhed fate, if we ſhould happen to fall under a common Calamity: they having on them not only the *mark of Mourners* and Interceſſors, but of *faithful Shepherds*: Whereas if an overflowing Scourge ſhould break in upon us, we have all poſſible reaſon, both from the Judgments of God, and the preſent ſcituation of Affairs, to believe that it will *begin at the Sanctuary*, at thoſe who have *profaned* the *holy things*; and have made the *daily Sacrifice to be loathed.*

There is another, and perhaps yet a more diſmal Character of the preſent ſtate of the Age, that calls on the *Clergy*, to conſider well both their own deportment, and the Obligations that lie upon them; which is the growing *Atheiſm* and *Impiety*, that is daily gaining ground, not only among us, but indeed all

Europe

Europe over. There is a Circulation obſerved in the general Corruptions of Nations: ſometimes Ignorance and Brutality overruns the World, that makes way for Superſtition and Idolatry: When Mankind is diſguſted with theſe, then fantaſtical and Enthuſiaſtical Principles, and under theſe hypocritical Practiſes have their courſe; theſe being ſeen through, give great occaſions to profaneſs, and with that, *Atheiſm*, and a disbelief of all Religion, at leaſt of all Revealed Religion, is nouriſhed: and that is very eaſily received by depraved Minds, but very hardly rooted out of them: For though it is very eaſie to beat an Enquirer into things, out of all ſpeculative Atheiſm; yet when a disbelief of Sacred Matters, and a profane Contempt of them, has once vitiated ones mind, it is a very extraordinary thing, and next to mira-

culous, to see such an one reduced. Now this I am forced to declare, That having had much free Conversation with many that have been fatally corrupted that way, they have very often owned to me, that nothing promoted this so much in them, as the very bad Opinion which they took up of all Clergymen of all sides: They did not see in them that strictness of life, that contempt of the World, that Zeal, that Meekness, Humility and Charity; that Diligence and Earnestness, with relation to the great Truths of the Christian Religion, which they reckoned they would most certainly have, if they themselves firmly believed it: Therefore they concluded, that those, whose business it was more strictly to enquire into the truth of their Religion, knew that it was not so certain, as they themselves,

for

for other ends, endeavoured to make the World believe it was: And that, tho for carrying on of their own Authority or Fortunes, which in one word, they call their *Trade*, they ſeemed to be very poſitive in affirming the Truth of their Doctrines; yet they in their own hearts did not believe it, ſince they lived ſo little ſuitable to it, and were ſo much ſet on raiſing themſelves by it; and ſo little on advancing the Honour of their *Profeſſion*, by an exemplary Piety, and a Shining Converſation.

This is a thing not to be anſwered by being angry at them for ſaying it, or by reproaching ſuch as repeat it, as if they were *Enemies to the Church*; theſe Words of Heat and Faction ſignifying nothing to work upon, or convince any. For how little ſtrength ſoever there may be in this, as it is made an Argument,

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it is certainly ſo ſtrong a prejudice, that nothing but a real Refutation of it, by the eminent Vertues and Labours of many of the Clergy, will ever conquer it. To this, as a Branch or Part of it, another conſideration from the preſent State of things is to be added, to call upon the Clergy to ſet about the Duties of their Calling; and that is, the contempt they are generally fallen under, the Injuſtice they daily meet with, in being denied their Rights, and that by ſome out of Principle, and by others out of downright and undiſguiſed Sacriledge. I know a great deal of this is too juſtly, and too truly to be caſt on the Poverty of the Clergy: But what can we ſay, when we find often the pooreſt Clarks in the Richeſt Livings? whoſe Incumbents not content to devour the Patrimony of the Church, *while they feed themſelves, and not the Flock* out of

of it; are so scandalously hard in their Allowance to their Curates, as if they intended equally to starve both *Curate and People*: And is it to be supposed, that the People will think themselves under a very strict obligation of Conscience, to pay religiously all that is due to one, who seems to think himself under no obligation to labour for it. And since it is a *Maxim* founded upon Natural Equity, *That the Benefice is given for the Office*; men will not have great Scruples in denying the *Benefice*, where the *Office* is neglected, or ill performed. And as for the too common Contempt that is brought on the Clergy, how guilty soever those may be, who out of hatred to their Profession, despise them *for their works sake*; yet we who feel our selves under these Disadvantages, ought to reflect on those Words of the *Prophet*, and see how far they Malach. 2. 7, 8, 9.

are

are applicable to us; *The Priests lips should keep Knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble at the Law: Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the People; according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in my Law.* If we studied to honour God, and so to do honour to our *Profession*, we might justly hope that he would raise it again to that credit which is due to it; and that he would make even our Enemies to be at peace with us, or at least afraid to hurt or offend us. And in this we have good reason to rest assured; since we do not find many Instances of Clergy-men, who live and labour, who preach and visit as they ought to do, that are under any Eminent Degrees of Contempt: If some do despise those that are faithful

ful to their Truſt, yet they muſt do it ſecretly; they dare not ſhew it, as long as their Deportment procures them the Eſteem, which we muſt confeſs does generally follow true Worth, and hearty Labours in the Miniſtry.

Theſe are things of ſuch conſequence, that it may ſeem a Conſideration too full of ill Nature, of Emulation, and of Jealouſie, if I ſhould urge upon the Clergy the Diviſions and Separation that is formed among us; though there is a terrible Word in the Prophet, that belongs but too evidently to this likewiſe; *The Paſtors are become bruti-* Jer. 10. 21.
ſh, and have not ſought the Lord; therefore they ſhall not proſper, and all their Flocks ſhall be ſcattered. If we led ſuch Exemplary Lives, as became our *Character*, if we applied our ſelves wholly to the Duties of our *Profeſſion*, if we ſtudied to outlive

live, and outlabour thoſe that *divide* from us; we might hope by the Bleſſing of God, ſo far to overcome their Prejudices, and to gain both upon their Eſteem and Affections, that a very ſmall matter might go a great way towards the healing of thoſe Wounds, which have ſo long weakned and diſtracted us. Speculative Arguments do not reach the Underſtandings of the greater part, who are only capable of ſenſible ones: and the ſtrongeſt Reaſonings will not prevail, till we firſt force them to think the better of our Church, for what they ſee in our ſelves, and make them wiſh to be of a Communion, in which they ſee ſo much Truth, and unaffected Goodneſs and Worth: When they are once brought ſo far, it will be eaſy to compaſs all the reſt: If we did generally mind our Duties, and diſcharge them faithfully, this would

prepare

prepare ſuch as mean well in their Separation from us, to conſider better of the Grounds on which they maintain it: And that will beſt enforce the Arguments that we have to lay before them. And as for ſuch as divide from us with bad Deſigns, and an unrelenting Spite, they will have a ſmall party, and a feeble ſupport, if there were no more occaſion given to work on the Affections of the People, by our Errours and Diſorders.

If then either the ſenſe of the Wrath of God, or the deſire of his Favour and Protection; if Zeal for our Church and Countrey; if a ſenſe of the progreſs of Atheiſm and Irreligion; if the contempt that falls on us, and the Injuſtices that are daily done us; if a deſire to heal and unite, to purifie and perfect this our Church: If either the Concerns of this World, or of the next, can work

upon

upon us, and affect us, all these things concur to call on us, to apply our utmost Care and Industry to raise the Honour of our *Holy Profession*, to walk worthy of it, to perform the Engagements that we came under at the *Altar*, when we were dedicated to the Service of God, and the Church; and in all things both to adorn our Religion, and our Church.

It is not our boasting that the *Church of England* is the best reformed, and the best constituted Church in the world, that will signifie much to convince others: We are too much Parties to be believed in our own Cause. There was a Generation of men that cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, as loud as we can cry, *The Church of* England, *the Church of* England: When yet by their sins they were pulling it down: and kindling that Fire

which

which consumed it. It will have a better grace to see others boast of our Church, from what they observe in us, than for us to be crying it up with our *words*, when our *deeds* do decry it. Our Enemies will make severe Inferences from them; and our Pretensions will be thought vain and impudent things, as long as our Lives contradict them.

It was on design to raise in myself and in others, a deep sense of the obligations that we lie under, of the Duties of our Functions; of the extent of them, and of the Rewards that follow them, and to observe the proper Methods of performing them, so as they may be of the greatest advantage both to our selves and others, that I have entred on these Meditations. They have been for many years the chief Subjects of my Thoughts: If few have writ on them among us, yet we have St. *Gre-*

gory Nazianzen's Apologetick, Saint *Chryſoſtom*'s Books of the Prieſthood, *Gregory* the Great's Paſtoral, and *Bernard*'s Book of Conſideration, among the Ancients, and a very great number of Excellent Treatiſes, writ lately in *France* upon them. I began my Studies in Divinity with reading theſe, and I never yet grew weary of them; they raiſe ſo many Noble Deſigns, they offer ſuch Schemes, and carry ſo much of unction and life in them, that I hope an imperfect Eſſay this way may have ſome effect. For the *Searcher of hearts* knows, I have no Deſign in it, ſave this of *ſtirring up* in my ſelf and others, *the gift which was given by the Impoſition of hands.*

OF

OF THE

Paſtoral Care.

CHAP. I.

Of the Dignity of Sacred Imployments, and the Names and Deſignations given to them in Scripture.

HOW low ſoever the Eſteem of the Clergy may be ſunk in a profane and corrupt Age, and how much ſoever the Errors and Diſorders of Clergy-men may have contributed to bring this not only upon themſelves, but upon others who deſerve better, but are unhappy in being mixed with ſo much ill Company; yet

certainly if we either consider the nature of things in themselves, or the value that is set on that *Profession*, in the Scriptures, it will appear that it ought to be considered at another rate than it is. As much as the *Soul* is better than the *Body*, and as much as the purifying and perfecting the *Soul* is preferable to all those Mechanical Imployments which relate to the *Body*, and as much as *Eternity* is more valuable than this short and transitory *Life*; so much does this Imployment excel all others.

A Clergy-man, by his Character and design of life, ought to be a man separated from the Cares and Concerns of this World, and dedicated to the study and meditation of Divine matters. Whose Conversation ought to be a Pattern for others; a constant Preaching to his People: who ought to offer up the Prayers of the People in their name, and as their mouth to God; who ought to be praying and interceding for them in secret, as well as officiating among them in publick: who ought to be distributing among them the Bread of life, *the Word of God*; and to be dispensing among them the sacred Rites, which are the Badges, the Union, and the Supports of Christians. He ought

to

to admoniſh, to reprove, and to comfort them, not only by his general Doctrine in his Sermons, but from *Houſe to Houſe*; that ſo he may do theſe things more home and effectually, than can be done from the Pulpit. He is to watch over their Souls, to keep them from error, and to alarm them out of their ſins, by giving them *warning* of the Judgments of God; to viſit the ſick, and to prepare them for the Judgment and life to come.

This is the *Function* of a *Clergy-man*; who that he may perform all theſe Duties with more advantage, and better effect, ought to behave himſelf ſo well, that his own Converſation may not only be without *offence*, but be ſo *exemplary*, that his People may have reaſon to conclude, that he himſelf does firmly believe all thoſe things which he propoſes to them: that he thinks himſelf bound to follow all thoſe Rules that he ſets them; and that they may ſee ſuch a ſerious ſpirit of Devotion in him, that from thence they may be induced to believe, that his chief deſign among them, is to do them good, and to ſave their Souls: which may prepare them ſo to eſteem and love him, that they may not be prejudiced againſt any thing that he does and ſays in publick, by

any thing that they obſerve in himſelf in ſecret. He muſt alſo be imploying himſelf ſo well in his private Studies, that from thence he may be furniſhed with ſuch a variety of lively thoughts, divine meditations, and proper and noble expreſſions, as may enable him to diſcharge every part of his duty, in ſuch a manner, as may raiſe not ſo much his own reputation, as the credit of his Function, and of the great *Meſſage* of *Reconciliation* that is committed to his charge: Above all Studies, he ought to apply himſelf to underſtand the Holy Scriptures aright; to have his memory well furniſhed that way, that ſo upon all occaſions, he may be able to enforce what he ſays out of them, and ſo *be an able Miniſter of the New Teſtament.*

This is in ſhort the *Character* of a true *Clergy-man*, which is to be more fully opened and enlarged on in the following parts of this Book. All this looks ſo great and ſo noble, that it does not appear neceſſary to raiſe it, or to inſiſt on it more fully. Indeed it ſpeaks its own dignity ſo ſenſibly, that none will diſpute it, but ſuch as are open Enemies to all Religion in general, or to the Chriſtian Religion in particular; and yet even few

of

of theſe, are ſo entirely corrupted, as not to wiſh that External Order and Policy were kept up among men, for reſtraining the Injuſtice and Violence of unruly Appetites and Paſſions; which few, even of the Tribe of the Libertines, ſeem to deſire to be let looſe; ſince the Peace and Safety of Mankind, require that the World be kept in Method, and under ſome Yoke.

It will be more ſutable to my deſign, to ſhew how well this *Character* agrees with that which is laid down in the Scriptures concerning theſe *Offices*. I ſhall begin firſt with the *Names*, and then go on to the *Deſcriptions*, and laſtly proceed to the *Rules* that we find in them. The name of *Deacon*, that is now appropriated to the loweſt *Office* in the Church, was in the time that the New Teſtament was writ, uſed more promiſcuouſly: For the *Apoſtles*, the *Evangeliſts*, and thoſe whom the Apoſtles ſent to viſit the Churches, are all called by this *name*. Generally in all thoſe places where the word *Miniſter* is in our Tranſlation, it is *Deacon* in the Greek, which ſignifies properly a *Servant*, or one who labours for another. Such Perſons are dedicated to the immediate Service of God; and are appropriated to the Offices

and Duties of the Church: ſo this term both expreſſes the dignity and the labour of the Imployment.

The next *Order* carries now the name of *Presbyter*, or *Elder*; which tho at firſt it was applied not only to *Biſhops*, but to the *Apoſtles* themſelves; yet in the ſucceeding Ages, it came to be appropriated to the Second Rank of the Officers in the Church. It either ſignifies a Seniority of *Age*, or of *Chriſtianity*, in oppoſition to a *Neophite* or *Novice*, one newly converted to the *Faith*; but by common Practice, as *Senate* or *Senator*, being at firſt given to Councellors, by reaſon of their *Age*, came afterwards to be a Title appropriate to them; ſo the Title *Presbyter* (altered in pronunciation to be in *Engliſh*, *Prieſt*) or *Elder* being a Character of reſpect, denotes the Dignity of thoſe to whom it belongs: But ſince St. *Paul* divides this Title either into two different Ranks, or into two different Performances of the Duties of the ſame Rank, thoſe *that rule well*, and *thoſe that labour in Word and Doctrine*; this is a Title that *ſpeaks* both the Dignity, and likewiſe the Duty belonging to this Function.

1 Tim. 5. 15.

The Title which is now by the Cuſtom of many Ages given to the higheſt Function in the Church, of *Biſhop*, or *Inſpector*, and

Over-

Overseer, as it imports a Dignity in him, as the chief of those who *labour*; so it does likewise express his obligation to care and diligence, both in observing, and overseeing the whole *Flock*, and more specially in inspecting the Deportment and Labours of his *Fellow Workmen*, who are subordinate to him in the constitution of the Church, yet ought to be esteemed by him in imitation of the *Apostles*, his *Brethren*, his *Fellow-Labourers*, and *Fellow-Servants*. Next to the Names of the Sacred Functions, I shall consider the other Designations and Figures, made use of to express them.

The most common is that of *Pastor* or *Shepherd*. It is to be remembred, that in the first simplicity of Mankind for many Ages, men looked after their own Cattel, or employed their Children in it; and when they trusted that care to any other, it was no small sign of their Confidence, according to what *Jacob* said to *Laban*. The care of a good *Shepherd* was a Figure then so well understood, that the Prophet expresses God's care of his People, by *this, of his feeding them as a Shepherd, carrying his Lambs in his Bosom, and gently leading them that were with young*. Isa. 40. 11. Christ also calls himself *the Good Shepherd, that knew his Sheep*, Joh. 10. 1.

Sheep, and did not as a hireling, fly away when the Wolf came, but laid down his life for his Sheep. This then being ſo often made uſe of in both Teſtaments, is an expreſſion of the great Truſt committed to the Clergy, which likewiſe ſuppoſes a great, a conſtant, and a tender care in looking to, in feeding or inſtructing, in watching over, and guarding the Flock againſt Errors and Sins, and their being ready to offer themſelves to the firſt Fury of *Perſecution.*

The Title of *Stewards*, or *Diſpenſers*, which is the moſt honourable in a Houſehold, is alſo given to them. Theſe aſſign to every one his due ſhare, both of Labour and of Proviſion; theſe watch over them, and have the care and order of the other Servants aſſigned to them. So in this great *Family*, of which *Chriſt* is the *Head*, the *Stewards* are a Poſt of great Dignity, but alſo of much *Labour*, they ought to be obſerving the reſt of this Houſhold, that they may be faithful in the diſtribution, and ſo encourage, admoniſh, reprove or cenſure, as there is occaſion for it.

1 Cor. 4. 1, 2.

They are alſo called *Ambaſſadors*, and that upon the nobleſt and deſirableſt Meſſage, for their buſineſs is to treat of *Peace* between

2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

between God and Man; to them is given the *Word* or Doctrine of *Reconciliation*; they are ſent by Chriſt, and do ſpeak in God's Name; as if *God did beſeech men by them; ſo do they in Chriſt's ſtead,* who is the Mediator, *preſs men to be reconciled to God*; Words of a very high ſound, of great Truſt and Dignity, but which import likewiſe great obligations. An *Ambaſſador* is very ſolicitous to maintain the Dignity of his Character, and his Maſter's Honour; and chiefly to carry on that which is the main buſineſs that he is ſent upon, which he is always contriving how to promote: So if the Honour of this Title affects us as it ought to do, with a juſt value for it, we ought at the ſame time to conſider the Obligations that accompany it, of living ſuitable to it, anſwering in ſome ſort, the Dignity and Majeſty of *the King of kings*, that has committed it to us; and of labouring with all poſſible diligence, to effectuate the great Deſign on which we are ſent; The reconciling Sinners to God: The *Work* having in it ſelf a proportion to the *Dignity* of him that imploys us in it.

Another, and yet a more Glorious Title, is that of *Angels*, who as they are of a pure and ſublime Nature, and are called a *Fla-*

Rev. 2. 3. a *Flaming Fire*, so *they do always behold the face*
ch. 2 Cor. 8. *of our Heavenly Father, and ever do his will*,
23. and are also *Ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are appointed to be the Heirs of Salvation*: This Title is given to Bishops and Pastors; and as if that were not enough, they are in one place called not only the Messengers or *Angels of the Churches*, but also *the Glory of Christ*. The Natural Importance of this is, that men to whom this Title is applied, ought to imitate those Heavenly Powers, in the elevation of their Souls; to contemplate the Works and Glory of God, and in their constant *doing his will*, more particularly in *ministring* to the Souls of those, for whom the great Angel of the Covenant made himself a Sacrifice.

I do not among these Titles reckon
3. Heb. 7, those of *Rulers* or *Governours*, that are al-
17. so given to Bishops, because they seem to be but another Name for *Bishops*, whose Inspection was a Rule and Government, and so carried in its signification, both Authority and Labour. To these Designations, that carry in them Characters of *Honour*, but of *Honour* joyned to *Labour*, and for the sake of which the *Honour* was due, according to that, *esteem them very highly for their works sake*; I shall add some

ſome other Deſignations, that in their ſignifications carry only *Labour* without *Honour*, being borrowed from *Labours* that are hard, but no way *Honourable*.

They are often called *Watchmen*, who uſed to ſtand on high Towers, and were to give the Alarm, as they ſaw occaſion for it: Theſe Men were obliged to a conſtant attendance, to watch in the Night, as well as in the Day: So all this being applied to the Clergy, imports that they ought to be upon their *Watch-Tower*, obſerving what Dangers their People are expoſed to, either by their Sins, which provoke the Judgments of God; or by the Deſigns of their Enemies; they ought not by a falſe reſpect, ſuffer them to ſleep and periſh in their Sins; but muſt denounce the Judgments of God to them, and rather incur their diſpleaſure by their freedom, than ſuffer them to periſh in their Security. 3. Ezek. 17.

St. *Paul* does alſo call Church-men by the Name of *Builders*, and gives to the *Apoſtles* the Title of *Maſter-builders*; this imports both hard and painful Labour, and likewiſe great care and exactneſs in it, for want of which the Building will be not only expoſed to the injuries of Weather, but will quickly tumble down; and it 1 Cor. 3. 10.

gives

gives us to understand, that those who carry this Title, ought to study well the Great Rule, by which they must carry on the Interest of Religion, that so they may *build up their people in their most holy Faith*, so as to be *a Building fitly framed together.*

1 Cor 3. 9. *St.* Matth. 20. 1. *St.* Matt. 9. 37, 38. 1 Cor. 3. 6. They are also called *Labourers in God's Husbandry*, *Labourers in his Vineyard*, *and Harvest*, who are to *sow*, *plant* and *water*, and to cultivate the Soil of the Church. This imports a continual return of daily and hard *Labour*, which requires both Pain and Diligence. They are also called *Soldiers*, men that did war and fight against the *Powers of Darkness*. The Fatigue, the Dangers and Difficulties of that State of Life, are so well understood, that no Application is necessary to make them more sensible.

2. Philip. 25.

And thus by a particular enumeration of either the more special names of these Offices, such as *Deacon*, *Priest* and *Bishop*, *Ruler* and *Governour*, or of the designations given to them of *Shepherds* or *Pastors*, *Stewards*, *Ambassadors* and *Angels*, it appears that there is a great *Dignity* belonging to them, but a *Dignity* which must carry *labour* with it, as that for which the *honour* is due: The other Titles of *Watch-*

Watchmen, *Builders*, *Labourers* and *Soldiers*, import also that they are to decline no part of their *duty*, for the *labour* that is in it, the dangers that may follow, or the seeming meanness that may be in it, since we have for this so great a Rule and Pattern set us by our Saviour, who has given us this Character of himself, and in that a Rule to all that pretend to come after him, *The Son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister.* This was said upon the proud Contentions that had been among his Disciples, who should be the greatest: two of them presuming upon their near relation to him, and pretending to the first Dignity in his Kingdom; upon that he gave them to understand, That the Dignities of his Kingdom were not to be of the same nature with those that were in the World. It was not *Rule* or *Empire* to which they were to pretend; *The Disciple was not to be above his Lord:* And he that humbled himself to be the last and lowest in his Service, was by so doing, really the first. St. Matth. 20. 28.

He himself descended to the *washing his Disciples feet*; which he proposeth to their imitation; and that came in latter Ages to be taken up by Princes, and acted by them in *pageantry*: But the plain account John 13. 5.

of

of that Action, is, That it was a Prophetical Emblem; of which ſort we find ſeveral Inſtances both in *Iſaiah*, *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel*: the Prophet doing ſomewhat that had a myſtical ſignification in it, relating to the Subject of his Prophecy: So that our Saviour's waſhing the feet of his Diſciples, imported the Humility, and the deſcending to the meaneſt Offices of Charity, which he recommended to his Followers, particularly to thoſe whom he appointed to preach his Goſpel to the World.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Rules ſet down in Scripture for thoſe that miniſter in Holy things; and of the Corruptions that are ſet forth in them.

I Intend to write with all poſſible ſimplicity, without the affectations of a ſtrictneſs of Method: and therefore I will give one full view of this whole matter, without any other order than as it lies in the Scriptures: and will lay both the Rules and the Reproofs that are in them together, as things that give light to one another. In the *Law* of *Moſes* we find many very particular Rules given for the waſhing and conſecration of the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, chiefly of the Holy *Prieſt*. The whole Tribe of *Levi* was ſanctified and ſeparated from the common Labours, either of War or Tillage: and tho they were but one in twelve, yet a tenth of all was appointed for them: they were alſo to have a large ſhare of another tenth; that ſo they might be not only delivered from all cares, by that large proviſion that was made for them, but might be able to relieve the neLevit. 8.

ceſſities of the Widows and Fatherleſs, the Poor and the Strangers, that ſojourned among them; and by their bounty and charity, be poſſeſſed both of the love and eſteem of the People. They were *holy to the Lord*; they were ſaid to be *ſanctified* or dedicated to God; and the Head of their Order carried on his Mitre this Inſcription, *Holineſs to the Lord*. The many waſhings that they were often to uſe, chiefly in doing their Functions, carried this ſignification in them, that they were appropriated to God, and that they were under very ſtrict obligations to a high degree of purity; they might not ſo much as mourn for their dead
Levit. 21. 1. Relations, to ſhew how far they ought to riſe above all the concerns of *fleſh and blood*, and even the moſt excuſable paſſions of human nature. But above all things, theſe Rules taught them, with what exactneſs, decency and purity they ought to perform
Levit. 22. 3, 4. thoſe Offices that belonged to their Function; and therefore when *Aaron*'s two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu* tranſgreſſed the
Levit. 10. 1. Law that God had given, *fire came out from the Lord, and devoured them*; and the reaſon given for it, carries in it a perv. 3. petual Rule. *I will be ſanctified in all them that draw near to me, and before all the people I will be glorified*: Which import, that

ſuch

ſuch as miniſter in Holy things, ought to behave themſelves ſo, that God's *Name* may be *glorified* by their means; otherwiſe, that God will *glorify* himſelf by his ſevere Judgments on them. A ſignal Inſtance of which we do alſo find in *Eli*'s two Sons, whoſe Impieties and Defilements, as they made the People to *abhor the offering of the Lord:* ſo they alſo drew down, not only heavy Judgments on themſelves, but on the whole Houſe of *Eli*; and indeed on the whole Nation. 1 Sam. 2d & 3d Ch.

But beſides the attendance which the Prieſts and Levites were bound to give at the Temple, and on the Publick Service there, they were likewiſe obliged to ſtudy the Law, to give the People warning out of it, to inſtruct them in it, and to conduct them, and watch over them: And for this reaſon they had *Cities* aſſigned them in all the Corners of the Land; that ſo they might both more eaſily obſerve the Manners of the People, and that the People might more eaſily have recourſe to them. Now when that Nation became corrupted both by Idolatry and Immorality, God raiſed up Prophets to be extraordinary Monitors to them; to declare to them their Sins, and to denounce thoſe Judgments which were coming up-

on them, because of them; we find the silence, the ignorance, and the corruption of their *Pastors*, their *Shepherds*, and their *Watchmen*, is a main Article of their Isa. 56. 10. Charge; so *Isaiah* tells them, that their *Watchmen were blind, ignorant, dumb dogs, that could not bark; sleeping, lying down, and loving to slumber:* Yet these careless *Watchmen* were covetous and insatiable, *They were greedy dogs, which could never have enough; Shepherds they were, that could not understand*; but how remiss soever they might be in *God's Work*, they were careful enough of their *own: They all looked to their own way, every one to his own gain from his quarter.* They were, no doubt, exact in levying their *Tythes* and *First-fruits*, how little soever they might do for them, bating their bare attendance at the Temple, to officiate there; so guilty they were of that reigning Abuse, of thinking they had done their duty, if they either by themselves, or by Proxy, had performed their Functions without minding what was incumbent on them, as *Watchmen*, or *Shepherds*. In opposition to such careless and corrupt Guides, God promises to his People, *To set Watch-*

Watch-men over them that ſhould never hold their peace day nor night.

As the Captivity drew nearer, we may eaſily conclude, That the Corruptions both of *Prieſt* and *People* increaſed, which ripened them for the Judgments of God, that were kept back by the Reformations which *Hezekiah* and *Joſiah* had made: but at laſt, all was ſo depraved, that though God ſent two Prophets, *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel*, to prepare them for that terrible Calamity, yet this was only to ſave ſome few among them; for the Sins of the Nation were grown to that height, that though *Moſes* and *Samuel*, *Noah*, *Job* and *Daniel*, had been then alive, to intercede for them, yet God declared that he would not *hear them*; nor *ſpare the Nation for their ſakes:* ſo that even ſuch mighty Interceſſors could only ſave their own Souls. In this deplorable ſtate we ſhall find that their *Prieſts* and *Paſtors* had their large ſhare. *The Prieſts ſaid not, Where is the Lord? They that handled the Law, knew me not, the Paſtors alſo tranſgreſſed againſt me*; and their Corruption went ſo far, that they had not only falſe Prophets to

Jer. 5. 2. Ezek. 14. 14.

Jer. 2. 8.

ſupport them, but the People, who, how bad ſoever they may be themſelves, do generally hate *evil Prieſts*,
Jer. 5. 32. grew to be pleaſed with it. *The Prophets prophecy falſely; and the Prieſts bear rule by their means; and my people*
Jer. 6. 13. *love to have it ſo: From the Prophet even to the Prieſt, every one dealt falſly.*
Jer. 23. 22. And upon that, a *wo is denounced againſt the Paſtors that deſtroyed and ſcattered the ſheep of God's paſture.* They by their Office ought to have fed the
v. 11. People; but inſtead of that, *they had ſcattered the flock, and driven them away, and had not viſited them; both Prophet and Prieſt was profane; their wickedneſs was found even in the houſe of God.* In oppoſition to all which, God promiſes by the Prophet, that he would ſet
v. 48. *Shepherds over them, that ſhould feed them; ſo that the people ſhould have no more reaſon to be afraid of their Paſtors,* or of being miſ-led by them; and he promiſed upon their return from the
Jer. 3. 15. Captivity, to *give them Paſtors according to his own heart, who ſhould feed them with knowledge and underſtanding.*

In

In *Ezekiel* we find the ſolemn and ſevere charge given to *Watch-men*, twice repeated; that they *ought to warn the wicked from his wickedneſs; otherwiſe, though he ſhould indeed die in his ſin, God would require his blood at the Watchmans hand; but if he gave warning, he had by ſo doing, delivered his own ſoul.* In that Prophecy we have the guilt of the Prieſts ſet forth very heinouſly. *Her Prieſts have violated my Law, and profaned my holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, the clean, and the unclean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths*; the effect of which was, that *God was profaned among them.* This is more fully proſecuted in the 34th Chap. which is all addreſſed to *the Shepherds of Iſrael, Wo be to the Shepherds of Iſrael, that do feed themſelves: Should not the Shepherds feed the Flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the Flock:* Then follows an enumeration of the ſeveral ſorts of troubles that the people were in, under the Figure of a *Flock*, to ſhew how they had neglected their Duty, in all the parts and inſtances of it; and had truſted to their Authority, which they had abuſed to Tyranny and *Violence*.

Ezek. 3. 17. Ezek. 33. 7.

Ezek. 22. 26.

Ezek. 34. 2.

v. 3.

v. 4. *The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthened, neither have ye healed that which was ſick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye ſought that which was loſt; but with force, and with cruelty have ye ruled them*; upon which follows a terrible Expoſtulation, and Denunciation of Judgments againſt them: *I am againſt the Shepherds, ſaith the Lord, I will require*
v. 10. *my Flock at their hands, and cauſe them to ceaſe from feeding the flock; neither ſhall the Shepherds feed themſelves any more.* And in the 44th Chap. of that Prophecy, one Rule is given, which was ſet up in the Primitive Church, as an unalterable Maxim, That ſuch Prieſts as had been guilty of Idolatry, ſhould not do the Office of a Prieſt any more, nor come near to any of the Holy Things, or enter within the Sanctuary, but were ſtill to bear their ſhame: They might miniſter in ſome inferior Services, ſuch as keeping the Gates, or ſlaying the Sacrifice; but they were ſtill to *bear their Iniquity.*

I have paſt over all that occurs in theſe Prophets, which relates to the *falſe Prophets*, becauſe I will bring nothing into this

this Diſcourſe, that relates to Sins of another Order, and Nature. In *Daniel* we have a noble Expreſſion of the value of ſuch as *turn men to Righteonſneſs*, *That they ſhall ſhine as the Stars, for ever and ever.* In *Hoſea* we find among the Sins and Calamities of that time, this reckoned as a main cauſe of that horrid Corruption, under which they had fallen, there *being no truth, no mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land, which was defiled by ſwearing, lying, killing, ſtealing and committing Adultery. My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge*: To which is added, *Becauſe thou haſt rejected knowledge* (or the inſtructing the People) *I will alſo reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no Prieſt to me; ſeeing thou haſt forgot the Law of thy God; I will alſo forget thy children.* That corrupt Race of Prieſts attended ſtill upon the Temple, and offered up the *Sin-Offering*, and feaſted upon their Portion; which is wrong rendred, *They eat up the ſin of my people;* for *ſin* ſtands there as in the Law of *Moſes*, for *Sin Offering*: Becauſe of the advantage this brought them, they were glad at the abounding of Sin; which is expreſſed *by their ſetting their heart*, or lifting up their Soul *to their iniquity*: The Con-

Dan. 12. 3.

Hoſ. 4. 1, 2, 6.

Concluſion of which is, that *they ſhould be given up for a very heavy curſe, of, Like Prieſts, like People.* In *Joel* we find the Duty of the Prieſts and Miniſters of the Lord, ſet forth in times of great and approaching Calamities, thus, They ought to be Interceſſors for the People, and *to weep between the Porch and the Altar*; *and ſay, Spare thy People, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the Heathen* (Strangers and Idolaters) *ſhould rule over them: Wherefore ſhould they ſay among the people, Where is their God?* There is in *Amos*, a very black Character of a depraved Prieſthood, *Their Prieſts teach for hire, and their Prophets divine for money.*

Joel 2. 17.

ch. 3. *v.* 11.

Theſe were the forerunners of the deſtruction of that Nation: But though it might be expected, that the Captivity ſhould have purged them from their droſs, as it did indeed free them from all inclinations to Idolatry; yet other Corruptions had a deeper root. We find in *Zechary, a Curſe againſt the Idol-Shepherd*, who reſembled the true *Shepherd*, as an *Idol* does the Original: But he was without ſenſe and life. *Wo be to the Idol Shepherd that leaveth the Flock*: The Curſe is figuratively

Zech. 11. 15.

ly expreſſed, *The ſword ſhall be upon his arm, and his right eye:* (the things that he valued moſt) *his arm ſhall be clean dried up, and his right eye ſhall be utterly darkned:* But this is more copiouſly ſet out by *Malachi*, in an Addreſs made to the Prieſts; *And now, O ye Prieſts, this Commandment is for you; If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give Glory unto my Name, I will even ſend a curſe upon you, and I will curſe your Bleſſings; yea I have curſed them already, becauſe ye do not lay it to heart* ---- Then the firſt Covenant with the Tribe of *Levi* is ſet forth; *My Covenant was with him, of Life and Peace: The Law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many from their iniquity: For the Prieſts lips ſhould preſerve knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts:* All this ſets forth the ſtate of a pure and holy *Prieſthood:* But then follow terrible Words; *But ye are departed out of the way, ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law: Ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. Therefore have I alſo made you contemptible, and baſe before all the people; according as ye* Mal. 2. 1.

have

have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the Law. Their ill example made many loath both their Law, and their Religion: They had corrupted their Inſtitution, and ſtudied by a groſs partiality, to bring the people to be exact in thoſe parts of the Law, in which their Wealth, or their Authority was concerned; while they neglected the more eſſential and indiſpenſible Duties.

Thus far have I gone over the moſt important places, that have occurred to me in the *Old-Teſtament*, relating to this matter; upon all which, I will only add one Remark, That though ſome exception might be made to thoſe Expreſſions, that import the Dignity and Sanctification of thoſe who were then conſecrated to the Holy Functions, as parts of that inſtituted Religion, which had its period by the coming of Chriſt; yet ſuch Paſſages as relate to Moral Duties, and to the Obligations that ariſe out of Natural Religion, have certainly a more binding force, and ought to be underſtood and explained in a more elevated and ſublime ſenſe, under the new Diſpenſation, which is *Internal* and *Spiritual*, compared, to which, the Old is called the *Letter* and the *Fleſh*:

Fleſh: Therefore the Obligations of the Prieſts, under the Chriſtian Religion, to a holy ſtrictneſs of Life and Converſation, to a diligent attendance on their Flock, and for inſtructing and watching over them, muſt all be as much higher, and more binding, as this New Covenant cancels the old one.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Paſſages out of the New-Teſtament, *relating to the ſame matter.*

THIS General Conſideration receives a vaſt improvement from the great Example that the Author of our Religion, *the great Biſhop and Shepherd of our Souls* has ſet us; who went about, ever doing good, to whom *it was as his meat and drink, to do the will of his Father that ſent him: He was the good Shepherd that knew his Sheep, and laid down his Life for them*: And ſince he ſet ſuch a value on the Souls of that Flock which he hath redeemed, and purchaſed with his own Blood; certainly thoſe to whom he has committed that *work of reconciliation* which ſtood himſelf ſo dear, ought to conſider themſelves under very ſtrict Obligations, by that charge of which they muſt give a ſevere account at the great day, in which

which the Blood of all thoſe who have periſhed through their neglect and default, ſhall be required at their hands. Yet becauſe I will not aggravate this Argument unreaſonably, I will make no uſe of thoſe paſſages which relate immediately to the Apoſtles: For their Function being extraordinary, as were alſo the Aſſiſtances that were given them for the diſcharge of it, I will urge nothing that belongs properly to their Miſſion and Duty.

In the Character that the Goſpel gives of the *Prieſts* and *Phariſees* of that time, we may ſee a juſt and true Idea, of the Corruptions into which a bad Clergy is apt to fall; they ſtudied to engroſs the knowledge of the Law to themſelves; and to keep the People in Ignorance, and in a blind dependance upon them: They were zealous in leſſer matters, but neglected the great things of the Law: They put on an outward appearance of ſtrictneſs, but under that there was much rottenneſs: They ſtudied to make Proſelites to their Religion, but they had ſo depraved it, that they became there-

thereby worſe men than before: They made great ſhews of Devotion, of Praying, and Faſting much, and giving Alms: But all this was to be ſeen of men, and by it they devoured the Eſtates of poor and ſimple people: They were very ſtrict in obſerving the Traditions and Cuſtoms of their Fathers, and of every thing that contributed to their own Authority or Advantage; but by ſo doing they made void the Law of God: In a word, they had no true worth in themſelves, and hated ſuch as had it: They were proud and ſpiteful, falſe and cruel, and made uſe of the credit they were in with the people, by their complying with them in their Vices, and flatterring them with falſe hopes to ſet them on to deſtroy all thoſe who diſcovered their Corruptions, and whoſe real and ſhining worth, made their counterfeit ſhew of it the more conſpicuous and odious. In this ſhort view of thoſe enormous Diſorders, which then reigned amongſt them, we have a full Picture of the corrupt ſtate of bad Prieſts, in all Ages and Religions, with this only difference, That the *Prieſts* in our Saviour's time were more careful

careful and exact in the External and Viſible parts of their Converſation, than they have been in other times: in which they have thrown off the very decencies of a grave and ſober Deportment.

But now to go on with the Characters and Rules that we find in the *New Teſtament*: our Saviour as he compared the Work of the Goſpel, in many parables to a *Field* and *Harveſt*, ſo he calls thoſe whom his Father was to ſend, *the Labourers in that Harveſt*, and he left a direction to all his Followers to *pray to his Father that he would ſend Labourers into his Harveſt.* Out of which both the Vocation and Divine Miſſion of the Clergy, and the Prayers of the Church to God for it, that are among us fixed to the Ember Weeks, have been gathered by many pious Writers. In the warnings that our Saviour gives to prepare for his ſecond coming, we find the Characters of good and bad Clergy-men ſtated, in oppoſition to one another, under the Figure of *Stewards*, the good are both *wiſe and faithful*; they *wait for his coming*, and in the mean while are *dividing to every one of their fellow Servants his portion to eat in due Seaſon*, that is their proportion both of the Doctrine and Myſteries of the Goſpel, according to their

9 S. *Matth.* 37.

12 St. *Luke* 42.

ſeveral capacities and neceſſities: but the bad *Stewards* are thoſe who put the evil day far from them, and *ſay in their heart the Lord declareth his coming*, upon which *they eat, drink, and are drunken*: they indulge their ſenſual Appetites even to a ſcandalous exceſs, and as for their *fellow Servants*, inſtead of feeding, of inſtructing, or watching over them, they *beat them*: they exercile a Violent and Tyrannical Authority over them. Their ſtate in the next World is repreſented as different as their behaviour in this was, the one ſhall be exalted from being a Steward to be a *Ruler over the Houſhold*, to be a *King and a Prieſt for ever unto God*. whereas the *other ſhall be cut aſunder, and ſhall have his portion with Unbelievers.*

The 10*th*. of St. *John* is the place which both Fathers, and more modern Writers have chiefly made uſe of to ſhew the difference between good and bad Paſtors. The *good Shepherds* enter *by the Door*, and *Chriſt is this Door* by whom they muſt enter; that is from whom they muſt have their Vocation and Miſſion: but the *Thief and Rober* who comes to *kill, ſteal, and deſtroy, climbeth up ſome other way*: whatever he may do in the ritual way for forms ſake, he has in his Heart no regard to *Jeſus Chriſt*,

Chriſt, to the Honour of his Perſon, the Edification of his Church or the Salvation of Souls; he intends only to raiſe and enrich himſelf: and ſo he compaſſes that, he cares not how many Souls periſh by his means, or thorough his neglect. *The good Shepherd knows his Sheep ſo well, that he can call them by name, and lead them out and they hear his voice: but the Hireling careth not for the Sheep*, he *is a Stranger* to them, *they know not his voice and will not follow him.* This is urged by all, who have preſſed the obligation of *Reſidence*, and of the perſonal Labours of the Clergy, as a plain divine and indiſpenſable precept: and even in the *Council of Trent*, tho' by the Practices of the Court of *Rome*, it was diverted from declaring *Reſidence* to be of *Divine Right*, the decree that was made to enforce it, urges this place to ſhew the Obligation to it. The *good Shepherd feeds the Flock*, and looks for *Paſture* for them; and is *ready to give his Life for the Sheep*: but the bad Shepherd is repreſented as a *Hireling that careth not for the Flock; that ſees the Wolfe coming, and upon that leaveth the Sheep and flieth.* This is, it is true a Figure, and therefore I know it is thought an ill way of reaſoning to build too much upon figurative Diſcourſes: yet

on the other hand our Saviour having delivered so great a part of his Doctrine in Parables, we ought at least to consider the main Scope of a Parable: and may well build upon that, tho' every particular Circumstance in it cannot bear an Argument.

I shall add but one passage more from the *Gospels*, which is much made use of, by all that have writ of this matter. When our Saviour confirmed St. *Peter* in his Apostleship, from which he had fallen by his denying of him, as in the Charge which he thrice repeated of *feeding his Lambs and his Sheep*, he pursues still the Figure of a *Shepherd*; so the question that he asked preparatory to it, was *Simon lovest thou me more than these*, from which they justly gather, that the *Love of God*, a Zeal for his Honour, and a preferring of that to all other things whatsoever, is a necessary and indispensible qualification for that Holy Imployment; which distinguishes the true *Shepherd* from the *Hireling*: and by which only he can be both animated and fortified, to go through with the labours and difficulties, as well as the dangers and sufferings which may accompany it.

12 St. Jo. 15.

When

When St. *Paul* was leaving his laſt charge with the *Biſhops* that met him at *Epheſus*, he ſtill makes uſe of the ſame Metaphor of *Shepherd* in thoſe often cited words, *Take heed to your ſelves and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Biſhops* or *Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.* 20 *Acts* 28. The words are ſolemn, and the conſideration enforcing them is a mighty one; they import the Obligations of the Clergy, both to an exactneſs in their own Deportment, and to earneſt and conſtant labours, in imitation of the Apoſtle, who during the three Years of his ſtay among them, had been *ſerving God with all humility of mind with many tears and temptations*, and *had not ceaſed to warn every one both night and day, with tears*: *and had taught them both publickly, and from Houſe to Houſe*: Upon which he leaves them, calling them all to witneſs that *he was pure from the Blood of all Men.* There has been great diſputing concerning the *Perſons* to whom theſe words were addreſſed; but if all Parties had ſtudied more to follow the Example here propoſed, and the Charge that is here given; which are plain and eaſie to be underſtood, then to be contending about things that are more doubtful; the good

V. 19. *V.* 20. *V.* 26.

Lives and the faithful Labours of Apoſtolical Biſhops, would have contributed more both to the edifying and healing of the Church, than all their Arguments or Reaſonings will ever be able to do.

St. *Paul* reckoning up to the *Romans* the ſeveral Obligations of Chriſtians, of all ranks to aſſiduity and diligence, in their callings and labours, among others he
Rom. 12. 7. numbers theſe, *Miniſters let us wait on our miniſtring, or he that teacheth on teaching, he that ruleth with diligence*: In his *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, as he ſtates the Dignity of the Clergy in this, that they ought to be accounted of *as the Miniſters of Chriſt, and*
1 *Cor.* 4. 2. *Stewards of the Myſteries of God.* He adds *that it is required in Stewards that a Man be found faithful.* In that *Epiſtle*, he ſets down that perpetual Law, which is the Foundation of all the Proviſion that has been
1 *Cor.* 9. 14. made for the Clergy, *That the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Goſpel ſhould live of the Goſpel.* But if upon that, the *Laity* have looked on themſelves as bound to appoint ſo plentiful a Supply, that the *Clergy* might have whereon to live at their eaſe and in abundance; then certainly this was intended that they being freed from the troubles and cares of this World,
Acts 6. 4. might attend continually *on the Miniſtry of*

the

the Word of God and on Prayer. Thoſe who do that *Work negligently*, provoke the *Laity* to repent of their bounty and to defraud them of it. For certainly there are no ſuch Enemies to the Patrimony and Rights of the Church, as thoſe who *eat the Fat but do not preach the Goſpel, nor feed the Flock.* Happy on the other hand are they, to whom that Character, which the Apoſtle aſſumes to himſelf, and to *Timothy*, does belong; *Therefore ſeeing we have received this miniſtry, as we have received mercy we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of diſhoneſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the Truth, commending our ſelves to every man's Conſcience in the ſight of God.* In the *Epiſtle* to the *Epheſians*, we have the ends of the Inſtitution of all the Ranks of Clergy-men ſet forth in theſe words. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers: for the perfecting of the Saints. for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying the Body of Chriſt: till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.* In theſe words we ſee ſomething that is ſo vaſt and

2 *Cor.* 4. 1. 2.

4 *Eph.* 11. 12. 13.

noble, ſo far above thoſe ſlight and poor performances, in which the far greater part do too eaſily ſatisfie themſelves; that in charity to them we ought to ſuppoſe that they have not reflected ſufficiently on the Importance of them. Otherwiſe they would have in ſome ſort proportioned their labours to thoſe great deſigns for which they are ordained; and would remember the Charge given to the *Coloſſians*, to ſay to *Archippus*, who it ſeems was remiſs in the diſcharge of his duty, *Take heed to the Miniſtry which thou haſt received in the Lord, that thou fullfil it.*

4 *Col.* 17.

The *Epiſtles* to *Timothy* and *Titus* are the Foundation of all the *Canons of the Church*, in theſe we have the Characters of *Biſhops*, and *Deacons*, as well as the duties belonging to thoſe Functions, ſo particularly ſet forth that from thence alone every one who will weigh them well, may find ſufficient Inſtruction, *how he ought to behave himſelf in the Houſe of God.* In theſe we ſee what patterns thoſe of the Clergy ought to *be in Word* (or Doctrine) *in Converſation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, and in Purity, they ought to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine*, that is both to the inſtructing and exhorting of their People. *They ought not*

1 *Tim.* 4. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

to

to neglect that gift that was given to them, by the laying on of hands, they ought to meditate on theſe things, to give themſelves wholly to them, that ſo their profiting may appear unto all: and to take heed to themſelves and their Doctrine; and to continue in them: for in ſo doing they ſhall both ſave themſelves and thoſe that hear them. Thoſe that govern the Church are more particularly charged, *before God, the Lord Jeſus and the Holy Angels, that they obſerve theſe things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality,* by Domeſtick regards, the conſiderations of Friendſhip, Intereſſion, or Importunity: and *above all that they lay hand ſuddenly on no man*; to which are added words of great terror, *neither be thou partaker of other mens ſins: keep thy ſelf pure.* Which ought to make great Impreſſion, on all thoſe with whom the Power of Ordination is lodged: ſince they do plainly import, that ſuch as do ordain any raſhly without due enquiry, and a ſtrict examination, entitle themſelves to all the ſcandal they give; and become partners of their guilt: which if well conſidered, muſt needs make all ſuch, as are not paſt feeling, uſe great care and caution in this ſacred Truſt. *Biſhops* are the Depoſitaries of the *Faith*, which they are to keep pure; and to hand down

1 *Tim.* 5. 21. 22.

faith.

faithfully according to these words, *And*
2 Tim. 2. 2, *the things which thou hast heard of me among*
& 4. *many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who may be able to teach others also*: upon this he prepares the Bishop for difficulties *to endure hardness as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ.* And according to that Figure, since those that go to war, do not carry unnecessary burdens with them, which may encumber and retard their march, he adds, *no man that warreth entangleth himself with the Affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him* for a Souldier; upon this it is that all those *Canons*, which have been made in so many Ages of the Church, against Church-mens medling with secular Affairs, have been founded; than which we find nothing more frequently provided against, both in the *Apostolical Canons*, in those of *Antioch*, in those made by the General Council of *Calcedon*, and in divers of the Councils of *Carthage*: but this abuse had too deep a root in the nature of man, to be easily cured. St. *Paul* does also in this place carry on the Metaphor to express the earnestness and indefatigableness of Clergy-mens Zeal, that as Officers in an Army were satisfied with nothing under *Victory*, which brought them the Honours of a Triumph, so we ought to *fight*, not only

only ſo as to earn our pay, but for *Maſtery* to ſpoil and overcome the Powers of darkneſs; yet even this muſt *be done lawfully*, not by deceiving the People with pious frauds, hoping that our good Intentions will atone for our taking bad methods: War has its Laws as well as Peace, and thoſe who manage this Spiritual warfare, ought to keep themſelves within the Inſtructions and Commands that are given them. Then the *Apoſtle* changing the Figure from the *Souldier* to the *Workman* and *Steward*, ſays, *ſtudy to ſhew thyſelf approved unto God* (not to ſeek the vain applauſes of men, but to prefer to all other things the witneſs of a good Conſcience, and that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, he may walk and labour as in the ſight of God) *a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed*; *rightly dividing the word of Truth*: This is according to the Figure of a Steward, giving every one his due portion; and a little after comes a noble Admonition, relating to the meekneſs of the Clergy towards thoſe that divide from them: *The Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive*; *but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if peradventure God will give them repentance, to the acknow-*

V. 5.

V. 15.

V. 24, 25, 26.

acknowledging the Truth. This is the Passage that was chiefly urged by our *Reformers* against the Persecution that the *Roman* Clergy did every where set on against them: The extent of it ought to be well considered, that so it may not be said, that we are only against persecution when it lies on our selves; for if it is a good defence to some, it is as good to others; unless we own that we do not govern our selves by that rule *of doing to others that which we would have others do to us.* In the next Chapter, we find the right Education of this Bishop, and that which furnishes a Clergy-man, to perform all the duties incumbent on him: *From a*
2 Tim. 3. 15. *Child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus*: That is the Old Testament well studied, by one that believed *Jesus* to be the *Messias*, and that was led into it by that *Faith*, did discover to a Man the great Oeconomy of God in the Progress of the Light, which he made shine upon the World by degrees, unto the perfect day of the appearing of the Sun of Righteousness) and to this he adds a noble Character of the inspired
v. 16. 17. Writings: *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine,*

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for reproof, for correction, for inſtructing in righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works. The *Apoſtle* goes on and gives *Timothy* the moſt ſolemn Charge that can be ſet out in words; which if underſtood, as belonging to all Biſhops, as the whole Church of God has ever done, muſt be read by them with trembling. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom, preach the Word, be Inſtant in Seaſon out of Seaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long ſuffering and doctrine* (that is with great gentleneſs in the manner, and clearneſs and ſtrength in the matter of their Inſtructions) and a little after, *watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an Evangeliſt: make full proof of* (or fulfill) *thy Miniſtry*: And as a conſideration to enforce this the more, he tells what a noble and agreeable proſpect he had in the View of his approaching diſſolution: *The time of his departing drew nigh, he was ready to be offered up*, as a Sacrifice for that Faith which he had ſo zealouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully preached: and here we have his two great preparatives for Martyrdom: The one was in looking on his paſt life and

2 *Tim.* 4. 1. 2.

V. 5.

V. 6.

V. 7. and labours: *I have fought a good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith.* The other was in looking forward to the Reward *that Crown of Righteouſneſs* *V.* 8. *which was laid up for him, which the Lord the Righteous Judge would give him at that day: and not only to him, but alſo to all thoſe that loved his appearing,* and certainly more eſpecially to thoſe who not only loved it themſelves, but who laboured ſo as to diſpoſe others alſo to love it. To all theſe conſiderations, though nothing needed to have been added, to one upon whom they made ſo ſtrange an impreſſion, as they did upon *Timothy*, yet one comes after all, which ought to teach us to work out *our Salvation with fear and trembling* ſince St. *Paul* tells *Timothy* that *Demas*, one of the Companions of his labours, *had forſaken him*, and that which *V.* 20. prevailed over him was *the Love of this preſent World.*

Theſe are the Rules and Charges given by St. *Paul* to *Timothy*, and in him to all the Biſhops and Paſtors that were to come after him in the Church. Some of theſe are again repeated in his *Epiſtle* to *Titus*, where we have the Characters ſet out; by which he was to prepare and examine thoſe *Elders* or *Biſhops*, who were

were to *rule the Houſe of God*: that thoſe being well choſen, they might be able *by ſound Doctrine both to exhort and convince the Gainſayers*, and that he might do his duty with the more advantage; he charges him to *ſhew himſelf in all things a pattern of good Works*: *in Doctrine, ſhewing uncorruptneſs, gravity, ſincerity; and uſing ſuch ſound Speech as could not be condemned*: *that ſo thoſe who were of the contrary Party* (the *Judaizers* who were ſtudying to corrupt the *Chriſtian* Religion by making a medly of it and *Judaiſme*) *might have no evil thing to ſay of him*; and after a glorious but ſhort Abſtract of the deſign of their *holy* Religion; he concludes that part of the *Epiſtle* in theſe words, *Theſe things ſpeak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority*: to which he adds a Charge, that may ſeem more proper to be addreſſed to others, then to himſelf, *let no man deſpiſe thee*: The ſame is likewiſe in his *Epiſtle* to *Timothy*, with this Addition, *let no man deſpiſe thy youth*: but theſe words do import that it is in a Biſhop's own Power, to procure due Eſteem to himſelf; at leaſt to prevent contempt; ſince a holy and exemplary Deportment, and faithful and conſtant labours never fail to do that. In the Concluſion of the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, we

1 *Tit.* 6.

2 *Tit.* 7. 8.

V. 15.

1 *Tim.* 4. 12.

we find both the Characters of those who had laboured among them, and had ruled them but who were then dead; and also of
13 *Heb.* 7. such as were yet alive. *Remember them who had the rule over you; who have spoken to you the Word of God, whose Faith follow, considering the end of their conversation*: they had both lived and died, as well as laboured in such a manner, that the *Remembring* of what had appeared in them, was an effectual means of perswading the *Hebrews* to be steady in the Christian Religion: for certainly, though while a man lives let him be ever so eminent, there is still room for ill-nature and jealousie to misrepresent things, and to suspect that something lies hid under the fairest appearances; which may shew it self in due time; all that goes off, when one has finished his course, so that all appears to be of a piece, and that he has died as he had lived. Then the Argument from his conversation appears in its full strength, without any diminution. But the charge given with relation to those who then had the rule over them is no less remarkable,
V. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you; and submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls; as they that must give account: that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that*

that is unprofitable for you : Here Obedience and Submiſſion is enjoyned, upon the account of their *Rulers watching over them, and for them* : and therefore thoſe who do not *watch* like Men that know that they muſt give account of that Truſt, have no reaſon to expect theſe from their People : Of a piece with this is St. *Pauls* charge to the *Theſſalonians, we beſeech you to know* (or to acknowledge,) *them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you, and to eſteem them very highly in love, for their works ſake* : Here both the Submiſſion and Eſteem, as well as the acknowledgment that is due to the Clergy, is ſaid to be for *their works ſake* : And therefore ſuch as do not the work and that do not labour and admoniſh their People, have no juſt claim to them. There is another expreſſion in the 2*d. Epiſtle* to the *Theſſalonians*, that is much urged by thoſe who have writ on this Head, *That if any will not work he ſhould not eat*, which if it is a Rule binding all Men, ſeems to lie much heavier on the Clergy.

I shall conclude all that I intend to bring out of the Scripture upon this Argument, with St. *Peter's* charge to the *Elders* of the Churches, to which he writ; which is indeed so full, that though in the Course of the *New Testament*, it had not lain last, it deserved by the Rules of Method, to be kept last; for the closing and enforcing all that has gone before, and for giving it its full weight. St. *Peter* descends 1 *Epistle.* 5 *ch.* 1 *ver.* to a level with them, calling himself no better than a *fellow Elder and a Witness of the suffering of Christ: And also a Partaker of the Glory which was to be revealed. Feed the Flock of God* (says he) *which is among you,* (these words will bear another rendring *as much as lieth in you*) *taking the oversight thereof not by constraint* (as forced to it by Rules, Canons, or Laws) *but willingly not for filthy lucre* (for though God has ordained that such as *preach the Gospel* should *live of the Gospel*; yet those who propose that to themselves as the chief Motive in entring into Holy Orders, are hereby severely

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ly condemned) *but of a ready mind, neither as being Lords over God's Heritage* (or *not uſing a deſpotick Authority over their ſeveral lots or diviſions*) *but being examples to the Flock*, not tyrannizing it over their People: But acquiring their Authority chiefly by their own exemplary converſation. The concluſion of the Charge, is ſuitable to the ſolemnity of it in theſe words: *And when the Chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ye ſhall likewiſe receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.*

With this I make an end of Citations from Scripture: I think it is as plain as words can make any thing, that ſuch as are dedicated to the ſervice of God and of his Church, ought to labour conſtantly and faithfully: And that in their own Perſons. For it is not poſſible to expreſs a perſonal Obligation, in terms that are both more ſtrict and more ſolemn then theſe are which have been cited, and all the returns of obedience and ſubmiſſion, of eſteem and ſupport, being declared to be due to them on the account of their *watch-*

ing over and *feeding the Flock of God*, thoſe who pretend to theſe, without conſidering themſelves as under the other Obligations, are guilty of the worſt ſort of *Sacriledge*, in devouring the things that are *Sacred*, without doing thoſe duties for which theſe are due, and what right ſoever the Law of the Land may give them to them, yet certainly according to the Divine Law thoſe who do not wait *at the Altar*, *ought not* 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14. *to be partakers with the Altar: Thoſe who do not miniſter about holy things, ought not to live of the things of the Temple: Nor ought thoſe who do not preach the Goſpel, live of the Goſpel.* If I had a mind to make a great ſhew of reading, or to Triumph in my Argument with the Pomp of Quotations, it were very eaſie to bring a Cloud of Witneſſes, to confirm the Application that I have made of theſe paſſages of Scripture: Indeed all thoſe who have either writ Commentaries on the Scriptures, ancient and modern, or have left Homilies on theſe ſubjects, have preſſed this matter ſo much, that every one that has made

made any progreſs in Eccleſiaſtical learning, muſt know that one might ſoon ſtuff a great many Pages with abundance of Quotations out of the Authors, both of the beſt, and of the worſt Ages of the Church: not only the Fathers, but even the Schoolmen, and which is more the Canoniſt have carried this matter very high, and have even delivered it as a Maxime, that all diſpenſations that are procured upon undue Pretences, the chief of which they reckon the giving a Man, an eaſie and large ſubſiſtence, are null and void of themſelves: And conclude that how ſtrong ſoever they may be in Law, yet they are nothing in Conſcience: And that they do not free a Man from his Obligations to *Reſidence* and *Labour*: And they do generally conclude that he who upon a Diſpenſation, which has been obtained upon Carnal accounts, ſuch as Birth, Rank or great Abilities, (and qualifications are not yet ſo good, as theſe) does not *Reſide*, is bound in Conſcience to reſtore the Fruits of a Benefice which he has thus enjoyed with a bad Conſcience without per-

forming the duty belonging to it, in his own Person. But though it were very easie to bring out a great deal to this purpose, I will go no further at present upon this Head: The *words of God*, seem to be so express and positive; that such as do not yield to so undisputable an Authority, will be little moved by all that can be brought out of Authors of a lower Form, against whom it will be easie to muster up many exceptions, if they will not be determined by so many of the *Oracles of the living God.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Senſe of the Primitive Church in this Matter.

I will not enter here into any Hiſtorical Account of the Diſcipline of the Church, during the firſt and beſt Ages of Chriſtianity. It is the glory of this Church, that in her diſputes of both hands, as well with thoſe of the *Church of Rome*, as with thoſe that *ſeparate* from her. ſhe has both the Doctrine and the Conſtitution of the Primitive Church of her ſide. But this Plea would be more entire and leſs diſputable, if our Conſtitution were not only in its main and moſt eſſential parts, formed upon that glorious Model; but were alſo in its Rules and Adminiſtrations, made more exactly conformable to thoſe beſt and pureſt times. I can never forget an advice that was given me above thirty years ago, by one of the worthieſt Clergy-men now alive; while I was

ſtudying the Controverſie relating to the Government of the Church, from the Primitive Times, he deſires me to joyn with the more Speculative Diſcoveries, that I ſhould make, the Senſe that they had of the Obligations of the Clergy, both with relation to their Lives, and to their Labours: And ſaid that the Argument in favour of the Church, how clearly ſoever made out, would never have its full effect upon the World, till abuſes were ſo far corrected, that we could ſhew a Primitive Spirit in our Adminiſtration, as well as a Primitive pattern for our Conſtitution. This made even then, deep Impreſſions on me, and I thank God the Senſe of it has never left me in the whole courſe of my Studies.

I will not at preſent enter upon ſo long and ſo Invidious a work as the deſcending into all the particulars, into which this matter might be branched out; either from the Writings of the *Fathers*, the Decrees of *Councils*, the *Roman Law* and the *Capitulars*, or even from the dreg of all, the *Canon Law* it ſelf, which though a Collection made in one of the worſt Ages, yet carries many rules in it, that would ſeem exceſſively ſevere, even to

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us, after all our Reformation of Doctrine and Worſhip. This has been already done with ſo much exactneſs, that it will not be neceſſary to ſet about it after the *Harveſt*, which was gathered by the learned Biſhop of *Spalato* in the laſt Book of his great Work: which the Pride and Inconſtancy of the Author, had brought under a diſeſteem, that it no way deſerves: For whatever he might be, that work was certainly one of the beſt productions of that Age. But this deſign has been proſecuted of late with much more exactneſs and learning, and with great honeſty and fidelity, where the intereſt of his Church did not force him to uſe a little Art, by *F. Thomaſin*, who has compared the modern and the ancient Diſcipline, and has ſhewed very copiouſly, by what ſteps the Change was made; and how abuſes crept into the Church. It is a work of great uſe, to ſuch as deſire to underſtand that matter truly. I will refer the curious to theſe, and many other leſſer Treaties, writ by the *Janſeniſts* in *France*, in which abuſes are very honeſtly complained off, and proper Remedies are propoſed; which in many places being entertained by Biſhops, that had a right Senſe of the Primitive

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Rules, have given the Riſe to a great Reformation of the *French* Clergy.

Inſtead then of any Hiſtorical deduction of theſe matters, I ſhall content my ſelf with giving the Senſe of *two* of the *Fathers* of the *Greek Church*, and *one of the Latin* upon this whole buſineſs, of the Obligations of the Clergy. The firſt is *Gregory* of *Nazianze* whoſe Father ordained him a Presbyter, notwithſtanding all his humble Interceſſions to the contrary, according to the cuſtom of the beſt Men of that Age; who inſtead of preſſing into Orders, or aſpiring to them, fled from them, excuſed themſelves, and judging themſelves unworthy of ſo holy a Character and ſo high a Truſt, were not without difficulty prevailed on to ſubmit to that, which in degenerate Ages Men run to as to a ſubſiſtance, or the mean of procuring it, and ſeem to have no other Senſe of that Sacred Inſtitution, then Mechanicks have of obtaining their Freedom in that Trade or Company in which they have paſſed their Apprenticeſhip. It were indeed happy for the Church, if thoſe who offer themſelves to *Orders*, had but ſuch a Senſe of them as Tradeſmen have of their *Freedom*: Who do

do not pretend to it till they have finiſhed the time preſcribed; and are in ſome ſort qualified to ſet up in it: Whereas, alas! men who neither know the Scriptures, nor the body of Divinity, who have made no progreſs in their Studies, and can give no tollerable account of that holy Doctrine, in which they deſire to be Teachers, do yet with equal degrees of confidence, and importunity, pretend to this Character, and find the way to it too eaſie, and the acceſs of it too free. But this Holy Father had a very different ſenſe of this matter. He had indeed ſubmitted to his Fathers Authority, he being his Biſhop as well as his Father. But immediately after he was ordained, he gives this account of himſelf in his *Apologetical Oration*, That he judging he had not that *ſublimity of Vertue, nor that familiar acquaintance with divine matters, which became Paſtors and Teachers*; he therefore intending to purifie his own Soul *to higher degrees of Vertue, to an Exaltation above ſenſible Objects, above his Body and above the World, that ſo he might bring his mind to a recollected and divine State, and fit his Soul that as*

a poliſhed mirrour it might carry on it the Impreſſions of divine Ideas unmixed with the allay of earthly Objects, and might be ſtill caſting a brightneſs upon all his Thoughts, did in order to the raiſing himſelf to that, retire to the Wilderneſs. He had obſerved that many *preſſed to handle the holy Myſteries, with unwaſhed hands, and defiled Souls: And before they were meet to be initiated to the divine Vocation, were crouding about the Altar, not to ſet patterns to others, but deſigning only a ſubſiſtence to themſelves: reckoning that the holy dignity, was not a Truſt for which an account was to be given, but a ſtate of Authority and Exemption. They had neither piety nor parts to recommend them, but were the reproaches of the Chriſtian Religion, and were the Peſts of the Church: Which infected it faſter than any plague could do the Air, ſince Men did eaſily run to imitate bad Examples, but were drawn off very hardly by the perfecteſt patterns to the practice of Vertue. Upon which he formed a high Idea of the eminent worth and vertues which became thoſe who governed*

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the Church : And of the great Progreſs that they ought to be duly making, not contented with low meaſures of it, as if they were to weigh it critically in nice ballances; and not to riſe up to the higheſt degrees poſſible in it. Yet even this, was not all : For to govern mankind which was ſo various, and ſo uncertain a ſort of Creature, ſeemed to him the higheſt pitch of knowledge and wiſdom, as far above that skill and labour that is neceſſary to the curing of bodily Diſeaſes as the Soul is ſuperiour to the Body, and yet ſince ſo much Study and Obſervation was neceſſary to make a Man a skillful Phyſician, he concluded that much more was neceſſary for the Spiritual Medicine : The deſign of which was to give Wings to the Soul, to raiſe it above the World, and to conſecrate it to God, here he runs out into a noble rapture, upon the excellence and ſublimity of the Chriſtian Religion, and upon the art of governing Souls, of the different methods to be taken, according to the diverſity of mens capacity and tempers: and of dividing the word of God aright, among

mong them. The difficulties of which he proſecutes in a great variety of ſublime Expreſſions and Figures: but concludes lamenting that *there was ſo little order, then obſerved, that men had ſcarce paſſed their Childhood when, before they underſtood the Scriptures, not to ſay before they had waſhed off the ſpots and defilements of their Souls, if they had learned but two or three pious words, which they had got by heart, or had read ſome of the Pſalms of* David, *and put on an outward garb that carried an appearance of piety in it, theſe men were preſently puſhed on by the Vanity of their minds, to aſpire to the Government of the Church.* To ſuch Perſons he addreſſes himſelf very Rhetorically, and asks them, *what they thought of the commoneſt imployments ſuch as the playing on Inſtruments or of dancing, in compariſon with Divine Wiſdom: For acquiring the one they know great pains and much practice was neceſſary: could they then imagin that the other ſhould be ſo eaſily attained:* but he adds *that one may as well ſow upon Rocks, and talk*

talk to the deaf, as hope to work upon Persons, who have not yet got to that degree of Wisdom, of being sensible of their own ignorance. This evil he had often with many tears lamented, but the pride of such men was so great, that nothing under the Authority of a St. Peter *or a St.* Paul, *could work upon them.* Upon this mention of St. *Paul*, he breaks out into a rapture, upon his labours and sufferings, and the care of all the Churches that lay on him; his becoming all things to all men, his gentleness where that was necessary, and his authority upon other occasions, his zeal, his patience, his constancy, and his prudence in fulfilling all the parts of his Ministry. Then he cites several of the Passages of the Prophets, particularly those of *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel*, *Zachary* and *Malachi*, which relate to the corruptions of the *Priests* and *Shepherds* of *Israel*. And shews how applicable they were to the Clergy at that time, and that all the woes denounced

nounced againſt the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* belonged to them, with heavy aggravations. *Theſe thoughts poſſeſſed him day and night; they did eat out his very ſtrength and ſubſtance; they did ſo afflict and deject him, and gave him ſo terrible a Proſpect of the Judgments of God, which they were drawing down upon the Church, that he inſtead of daring to undertake any part of the Government of it, was only thinking how he ſhould cleanſe his own Soul and fly from the wrath, which was to come, and could not think that he was yet while ſo young, meet to handle the Holy Things.* Where he runs out into a new Rapture in magnifying the dignity of holy Functions, and upon that ſays, *that tho' he had been dedicated to God from his Mothers Womb, and had renounced the World and all that was charming in it, even Eloquence it ſelf, and had delighted long in the Study of the Scriptures, and had ſubdued many of his Appetites and Paſſions, yet after all this, in which perhaps he had become a Fool in glorying, he had ſo high a*

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Nation of the care and government of Souls, that he thought it above his ſtrength; eſpecially in ſuch bad times in which all things were out of order: Factions were formed, and Charity was loſt; ſo that the very Name of a Prieſt was a Reproach, as if God had powred out Contempt upon them: and thereby impious Men daily blaſphemed his Name. And indeed, all the ſhew of Religion that remained was in their mutual heats and animoſities, concerning ſome matters of Religion; *they condemned and cenſured one another, they cheriſhed and made uſe of the worſt Men, ſo they were true to their Party; they concealed their Crimes, nay, they flattered and defended ſome that ſhould not have been ſuffered to enter into the Sanctuary: They gave the holy things to Dogs, while they enquired very narrowly into the failings of thoſe that differed from them, not that they might lament them, but that they might reproach them for them. The ſame faults which they excuſed in ſome, were declaimed againſt in others: So that the very Name of a good or a bad Man were not now conſidered, as the Characters of their Lives, but of their being of or againſt a ſide. And theſe abuſes were ſo Univerſal, that they were like People like Prieſt: If thoſe heats had ariſen*

upon the great Heads of Religion, he ſhould have commended the Zeal of thoſe who had contended for the Truth, and ſhould have ſtudied to have followed it. But their diſputes were about ſmall Matters, and things of no conſequence; and yet even theſe were fought for, under the Glorious Title of the Faith, tho the root of all was Men's private Animoſities: Theſe things had expoſed the Chriſtian Religion to the hatred of the Heathen, and had given even the Chriſtians themſelves very hard Thoughts of the Clergy: This was grown to that height, that they were then acted and repreſented upon the Stage; and made the Subject of the Peoples ſcorn. So that by their means, the name of God was blaſphemed: This was that which gave him much ſadder Apprehenſions, than all that could be feared from that wild Beaſt, that was then beginning to vex and perſecute the Church, (by which probably *Julian* is meant,) *the comfortable proſpect of dying for the name of Chriſt, made that a Perſecution was not ſo dreadful a thing, in his account, as the Sins, the Diviſions, and Diſtractions of Chriſtians.* This then was the reaſon that had made him fly to the Wilderneſs, for the ſtate of the Church had made him deſpond, and loſe all his courage: He had alſo gone thi-

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ther, that he might quite break himſelf to all his Appetites and Paſſions, and to all the Pleaſures and Concerns of this Life, that did darken the ſhinings of the Divine Image upon his Soul; and the emanations of the Heavenly Light. When he conſidered the Judgments of God upon *bad Prieſts* and many other ſtrict Rules in the old Diſpenſation, and the great Obligations that lay upon thoſe who were the *Prieſts*, of the living God, and that ought before they preſumed to offer up other Sacrifices, to begin with the Oblation of themſelves to God; he was upon all theſe Reaſons moved to prepare himſelf, by ſo long a Retreat.

I have given this long Abſtract of his *Apologetical Oration*, not only to ſet before my Reader the Senſe that he had of the ſacred Functions, but likewiſe to ſhew what were the Corruptions of that Age, and with how much Freedom this Holy Father laid them open. If there is any occaſion for applying any part of this to the preſent Age, or to any Perſons in it, I choſe rather to offer it in the Words of this great Man, than in any of my own. I wiſh few were concerned in them; and that ſuch as are, would make a due Application of them to them-

ſelves, and ſave others the trouble of doing it more ſeverely.

I go next to another *Father* of the *Greek Church*, S *Chryſoſtome*, whoſe Books of the *Prieſthood*, have been ever reckoned among the beſt pieces of *Antiquity*. The Occaſion of writing them, was this: He had lived many years in great Friendſhip with one *Baſil*; at laſt, they having both dedicated themſelves to ſacred Studies, the Clergy of *Antioch* had reſolved to lay hold on them, and to uſe that Holy Violence, which was in thoſe times often done to the beſt Men, and to force them to enter into *Orders*. Which when *Baſil* told *Chryſoſtome*, he concealed his own Intentions, but preſſed *Baſil* to ſubmit to it, who from that, believing that his Friend was of the ſame Mind, did not go out of the way, and ſo he was laid hold on; but *Chryſoſtome* had hid himſelf. *Baſil*, ſeeing he could not be found, did all that was poſſible to excuſe himſelf: but that not being accepted of, he was ordained: Next time that he met his Friend, he expoſtulated ſeverely with him for having forſaken him upon that Occaſion: This gave the Occaſion to thoſe Books, which are purſued in the way of a Dialogue.

The

The firſt Book contains only the preparatory Diſcourſes, according to the Method of ſuch Writings. In the 2*d.* he runs out to ſhew from our Saviour's Words to St. *Peter*, Simon *loveſt thou me?* 'What tender and fervent Love both to 'Chriſt and to his Church, a Prieſt 'ought to feel in himſelf before he en-'ters upon the feeding thoſe *Sheep*, 'which Chriſt *has purchaſed with his own* '*Blood.* To loſe the Souls of the *Flock* 'firſt, and then ones own Soul, for his 'Remiſsneſs, was no light matter. To 'have both the Powers of Darkneſs, and 'the Works of the Fleſh to fight againſt, 'required no ordinary meaſure both of 'ſtrength and courage. He purſues the 'Allegories of a *Shepherd* and a *Phy-'ſician*, to ſhew by the Parallel of theſe 'laid together; the labours and diffi-'culties of the *Prieſthood*, eſpecially, 'when this Authority was to be main-'tained only by the ſtrength of Per-'ſwaſion; and yet ſometimes ſevere 'methods muſt be taken; like Inciſions 'to prevent Gangrenes, or to cut off a 'Part already corrupted. In the ma-'naging this, great Art and Prudence 'was neceſſary: a Biſhop ought to have 'a great and generous, a patient and

'undaunted Mind: Therefore, *Chry-*
'*ſoſtome* ſays that he found, tho he
'truly loved his Saviour, yet he was
'ſo afraid to offend him, that he
'durſt not undertake a Charge, that
'he did not yet judge himſelf quali-
'fied for. It was not enough that a
'Man was tolerably well eſteemed by
'others: He ought to examine himſelf;
'for that of a Biſhop's being *well re-*
'*ported of*, is but one of many Cha-
'racters, declared neceſſary by S. *Paul.*
'He complains much that thoſe who
'raiſed Men to Orders, had more re-
'gard to *rank* and *wealth*, and to much
'time ſpent in a vain ſearch into *pro-*
'*fane Learning* (tho Chriſt choſe Fiſh-
'er-men and Tent-makers) than to
'true Worth, and an earneſt Zeal for
'the real good of the Church. In the
'3*d.* Book, he runs out with a great
'compaſs on the praiſes of the *Prieſt-*
'*ly Function*; he looked upon it as a
'dignity raiſed far above all the Honours
'of this VVorld, and approaching to
'the Angelical Glory. A Prieſt ought
'to aſpire to a Purity above that of
'other Mortals, anſwering that of An-
'gels. VVhen a Prieſt performs the
'Holy Functions, is ſanctifying the Ho-

'ly

'ly Euchariſt, and is offering a Cru-
'cified Chriſt to the People, his thoughts
'ſhould carry him Heavenwards, and
'as it were tranſlate him into thoſe
'upper Regions. If the Moſaical *Prieſt*
'was to be *Holy* that offered up Sa-
'crifices of a lower Order, how much
'*Holier* ought the *Prieſts* of this Re-
'ligion to be, to whom Chriſt has
'given the Power both of retaining
'and forgiving of Sins: But if
'S. *Paul*, after all his Viſions and La-
'bours, after all his Raptures and Suf-
'ferings, yet was inwardly burnt up
'with the concerns of the Church,
'and laboured with much fear and
'trembling, how much greater Appre-
'henſions ought other Perſons to have
'of ſuch a Truſt. If it were enough
'to be called to this Function, and to
'go through with the Duties incum-
'bent on it in ſome tolerable man-
'ner, the danger were not great; but
'when the Duty as well as Dignity,
'together with the Danger belonging
'to it, are all laid together, a Man
'is forced to have other Thoughts of
'the matter. No Man that knows he
'is not capable of conducting a Ship,
'will undertake it, let him be preſſed

'to it never ſo much: Ambitious Men
'that loved to ſet themſelves forward,
'were of all others the moſt expoſed
'to Temptations: They were apt to
'be inflamed by the ſmalleſt Provo-
'cations, to be glad at the faults of
'others, and troubled if they ſaw any
'do well; they courted Applauſe, and
'aſpired to Honour; they fawned on
'great Perſons, and trod on thoſe that
'were below them; they made baſe
'Submiſſions, undecent Addreſſes, and
'often brought Preſents to thoſe in
'Authority; they durſt not in any ſort
'reprove them for their Faults, tho
'they reproached the poor out of mea-
'ſure for their failings. Theſe were
'not the natural Conſequences of the
'Dignity of the Prieſthood; but un-
'worthy and defiled Perſons, who with-
'out true Merit, had been advanced to
'it, had brought it under Reproach.
'There had been no due care uſed in the
'choice of Biſhops; and by the means
'of bad choices, the Church was al-
'moſt ruined, through the groſs Igno-
'rance and Unworthineſs of many in
'that Poſt. Certainly, a worthy Prieſt
'has no ambitious aſpirings: Thoſe who
'fly to this Dignity from that baſe Princi-

'ple,

'ple, will give a full vent to it, when 'they have attained it. If Submissions, 'Flatteries, and Money it self, are ne- 'cessary, all will be employed: There- 'fore it was an indispensable Preparation 'to it, that one should be duly sensible 'of the greatness of the Trust, and of 'his own Unfitness for it; that so he 'might neither vehemently desire it, nor 'be uneasie if he should happen to be 'turned out of it. A Man may *desire* '*the Office of a Bishop*, when he considers 'it as a Work of toyl and labour, but 'nothing is more pestiferous than to de- 'sire it, because of the Power and Au- 'thority that accompanies it: Such Per- 'sons can never have the Courage that 'ought to shew it self in the Discharge 'of their Duty, in the reproving of Sin, 'and venturing on the Indignation of 'great Men; he confesses he had not yet 'been able to free his Mind from that Dis- 'ease, and till he had subdued it, he 'judged himself bound to fly from all 'the steps to Preferment; for the nearer 'he should come to it, he reckoned the 'appetite to it, would rage the higher 'within him; whereas, the way to break 'it quite, was to keep himself at the 'greatest distance from it: nor had he

'that

'that vivacity, or lively activity of temper, which became this Function; nor 'that softness and gentleness of mind, that 'was necessary to prepare him to bear injuries, to endure contempt, or to treat 'People with the mildness that Christ has 'enjoined his followers, which he 'thought more necessary to a *Bishop* than 'all Fastings, or bodily Mortifications 'whatsoever: And he runs out into a 'long Digression upon the great Mischiefs 'that a fretful and spiteful temper did to 'him that was under the power of it, 'and to the Church, when a Bishop was 'soured with it. It will often break out, 'it will be much observed, and will give 'great scandal: For as a little Smoke will 'darken and hide the clearest Object: so 'if all the rest of a Bishop's Life were 'brighter than the Beams of the Sun, a 'little Blemish, a Passion, or Indiscretion, 'will darken all, and make all the rest 'be forgotten: Allowances are not made 'to them, as to other Men; the World 'expects great things from them, as if 'they had not Flesh and Blood in them, 'not a Humane but an Angelical nature; 'therefore, a Bishop ought by a constant 'watchfulness, and a perpetual strictness, 'to be armed with Armour of Proof of

'all

'all sides, that no wound may hurt him.
'Stories will be easily believed to his dis-
'advantage, and his Clergy about him
'will be ready to find them out, and to
'spread them abroad. He laies this down
'for a certain Maxim, That every man
'knows himself best: and therefore what-
'soever others might think of him, he
'who knew well that he had not in him-
'self those qualifications, that were neces-
'sary for this Function, ought not to
'suffer himself to be determined by that.
'After this he lays open the great Dis-
'orders, Factions, Partialities, and Ca-
'lumnies, with which the Popular Ele-
'ctions were at that time managed: and
'the general Corruption that had over-
'run the whole Church; so that the
'Strictness and Authority, the Gentleness
'and Prudence, the Courage and Pati-
'ence, that were necessary to a Bishop
'were very hard to be found all together.
'He instances to make out the difficulty
'of discharging the duty of a Bishop,
'in that single point, of managing the
'Widows: who were so medling, so
'immoral, so factious and so clamorous,
'that this alone was enough to imploy
'a Bishop's prudence, and to exercise his
'patience: from that and another Arti-

'cle

'cle relating to it concerning the Virgins, 'he goes to consider the Trouble, the 'Difficulties, and Censures that Bishops 'were subject to, by the hearing of 'Causes, that were referred to them: 'Many pretending they were wronged 'by their Judgments, made shipwrack 'of the Faith, in revenge: and they pres- 'sed so hard upon the Bishops time, that 'it was not possible for him to content 'them, and discharge the other parts of 'his Duty. Then he reckons up the ma- 'ny Visits that were expected from Bi- 'shops: the several Civilities they were 'obliged to, which it was hard to ma- 'nage so, as not to be either too much or 'too little in them: Matter of censure 'would be found in both extreams. 'Then he reflects on the great temper 'that ought to be observed in the final 'sentence of Excommunication; be- 'tween a gentleness to Vice on the one 'hand, and the driving men to Despair 'and Apostasie on the other. And he con- 'cludes that Book with Reflections 'on the vast Burthen that follows 'the care of Souls. In his 4th. Book 'he runs through a variety of Arts 'and Professions; and shews how much 'skill and labour was necessary for every 'one of them: from whence he con-

'cludes

'cludes strongly, that much more was 'necessary for that which was the most 'important of all others; so that no 'consideration whatsoever, should make 'a man undertake it, if he did not find 'himself in some sort qualified for it: 'more particularly he ought to be ready to give an account of his Faith, and 'to stop the mouths of all gainsaiers, '*Jews*, *Gentiles*, and *Hereticks*: in which 'the Ignorance of many Bishops, carrying things from one extream to another, had given great occasion to Errours. A Bishop must understand the 'stile and phrase of the Scriptures well. 'From this he runs out into a very Noble Panegyrick upon St. *Paul*, in whom 'a pattern was set to all Bishops. His '5th Book sets out the labour of preaching the tentations to Vanity in it; the 'censures that were apt to be made if 'there was either too much or too little 'Art or Eloquence in Sermons: to this he 'adds the great exactness that a Bishop 'should use in preserving his Reputation; 'yet without Vanity: observing a due 'temper between despising the censures of 'the Multitude, and the servile courting of 'applauses: In his Sermons he ought 'above all things to study to edifie; 'but

'but not to Flatter his Hearers: or to use 'vain arts to raise esteem, or admiration 'from them. Since a Bishop whose mind 'was not purged from this disease, must 'go through many tossings and be much 'disquieted: and upon that he runs out 'so fully, upon the tentations to desire ap-'plause for Eloquence, and a readiness in 'speaking, that it plainly appears that he 'felt that to be his own weak side. The 6th 'Book is chiefly imployed to shew how 'much a harder thing it was to govern 'the Church, than to live in a *Desart*, 'under the severest mortifications.

I will go no further in this abstract, I hope I have drawn out enough to give a Curiosity to such as have not yet read those Excellent Books, to do it over and over again. For to any that has a true relish, they can never be too often read: every reading will afford a fresh pleasure, and new matter of Instruction, and Meditation. But I go in the last place to offer St. *Jerom*'s sense in this matter. I shall not bring together, what lies scattered through his works, upon this Argument, nor shall I quote what he writ in his Youth upon it, when the natural flame of his temper joyned with the heat of Youth might make him carry his

thoughts

thoughts further, than what humane nature could bear: But I shall only give an abstract of that which he writ to *Nepotion* on this Head, in his old Age, as he says himself: a good part of that Epistle being a reflection upon the different sense that old Age gives of these things, from that which he felt during the ardour of Youth.

He begins with the title *Clerk*, which signifying a Lot or Portion. 'Imports either that the Clergy are *God's Portion*, 'or that *God is theirs*, and that therefore they ought to *possess God, and be 'possessed of him.* He that has this portion, must be satisfied with it, and pretend to nothing, but having Food and 'Rayment, be therewith content: and (as 'men carried their Crosses naked, so) to 'be ready to carry his. He must not seek 'the advantages of this world in Christ's 'warfare; some Clerks grew richer under Christ, who made himself poor, 'than ever they could have been, if they 'had continued in the service of the 'God of this World: So that the Church 'groaned under the wealth of those, 'who were Beggars before they forsook 'the World: Let the Strangers and the 'Poor be fed at your Tables, says he, 'and

'and in these you entertain Christ himself. When you see a trafficking Clerk, who from being Poor grows Rich, and from being mean becoms great, fly from him as from a Plague. The conversations of such men corrupted good minds: They sought after wealth, and loved Company, the publick Places of conversation, Fairs and Market places: whereas a true Clerk loves silence, and retirement: then he gives him a strong caution against conversing with Women: and in particular against all those mean compliances, which some Clerks used towards rich Women; by which they got not only Presents during their lives, but Legacies by their Wills. That abuse had grown to such an intolerable excess, that a Law was made excluding *Priests* from having any benefit by *Testaments*: They were the only persons that were put under that incapacity: Heathen Priests were not included in the *Law*, yet he does not complain of the *Law*, but of those who had given just occasion for making it. The Laws of Christ had been contemned, so it was necessary to restrain them by humane Laws. It was the Glory of a *Bishop* to provide for the poor, but it was the

'*Re-*

'*Reproach* of a *Prieſt* to ſtudy the *enriching of himſelf.* He reckons up many Inſtances of the baſe and abject 'Flattery of ſome Clerks, to gain upon rich and dying perſons, and to get 'their Eſtates. Next he exhorts him 'to the conſtant and diligent ſtudy of 'the Scriptures; but to be ſure to do 'nothing that ſhould contradict his diſcourſes or give occaſion to his Hearers to anſwer him thus, *Why do not you do as you ſay?* Then he ſpeaks 'of the Union that ought to be between the Biſhop, and his Clergy: 'the affection on the one ſide, and the 'obedience on the other. In Preaching 'he muſt not ſtudy to draw *applauſes* 'but *Groans* from his Hearers. Their 'Tears was the beſt ſort of commendation of a Sermon, in which great 'care was to be taken to avoid the 'methods of the Stage, or of common 'Declamations. Great uſe was to be 'made of the Scriptures. The myſteries of 'our Faith and the Sacraments of our Religion ought to be well explained: Grimaces and ſolemn Looks are often made 'uſe of to give Weight and Authority to 'that which has none in it ſelf. He

'charges him to uſe a plain ſimplicity
'in his Habit, neither ſhewing too
'much nicety on the one Hand, that
'ſavours of Luxury, nor ſuch a neglect
'on the other, as might ſavour of Af-
'fectation. He recommends particular-
'ly the Care of the Poor to him.
'Then he ſpeaks of Clergy-Mens mu-
'tually preferring one another; con-
'ſidering that there are different Mem-
'bers in one Body, and that every
'one has his own Function, and pecu-
'liar Talent: And that therefore no
'man ought to over-value his own,
'or undervalue his Neighbours. A
'plain Clerk ought not to value him-
'ſelf upon his Simplicity and Igno-
'rance, nor ought a learned and elo-
'quent Man meaſure his Holineſs by his
'Rhetorick; for indeed of the two, a
'Holy Simplicity is much more valuable,
'than Unſanctified Eloquence. He ſpeaks
'againſt the Affectation of Magnificence
'and Riches, in the Worſhip of God, as
'things more becoming the Pomp of the
'Jewiſh Religion, than the Humility of
'the Spiritual Doctrine of Chriſt. He
'falls next upon the high and ſumptuous
'way of living of ſome Prieſts, which they

'pre-

'pretended was neceſſary to procure 'them the reſpect that was due to them; 'and to give them intereſt and credit: 'but the World, at leaſt the better part 'of it, would always value a Prieſt more 'for his Holineſs, than for his Wealth. He 'charges him ſtrictly to avoid all the ex-'ceſſes of Wine, and in Oppoſition to 'that to faſt much, but without Superſti-'tion, or a nicety in the choice of ſuch 'things as he was to live on in the time 'of faſting. Some ſhewed a trifling Su-'perſtition in thoſe Matters, as well as 'Vanity and Affectation; that was in-'deed Scandalous. Plain and ſimple Fa-'ſting was deſpiſed as not ſingular nor 'pompous enough for their Pride. For 'it ſeems by what follows, that the Cler-'gy was then corrupted with the ſame diſ-'orders, with which our Saviour had re-'proached the *Phariſees*, while they did 'not ſtudy inward Purity, ſo much as 'outward Appearances; nor the pleaſing 'of God, ſo much as the praiſe of Men. 'But here he ſtops ſhort, for it ſeems he 'went too near the deſcribing ſome emi-'nent Man in that Age; from that he 'turns to the Government of a Prieſt's

'Tongue: He ought neither to detract 'from any one himſelf, nor to encourage 'ſuch as did: The very hearkning to 'ſlander, was very unbecoming. They 'ought to viſit their People, but not to 'report in one place, what they obſerved 'in another; in that they ought to be 'both diſcreet and ſecret. *Hippocrates* 'adjured thoſe that came to ſtudy from 'him, to be ſecret, grave, and prudent 'in their whole behaviour; but how 'much more did this become thoſe, to 'whom the Care of Souls was truſted. 'He adviſes him to viſit his People rather 'in their Afflictions, than in their Pro-'ſperity; not to go too often to their 'Feaſts, which muſt needs leſſen him that 'does it too much. He, in the laſt place, 'ſpeaks very ſeverely of thoſe who ap-'plied the Wealth of the Church to their 'own private Uſes. It was Theft to de-'fraud a Friend, but it was *Sacrilege* to 'rob the Church. It was a Crime that 'exceeded the Cruelty of High-way Men, 'to receive that which belonged indeed 'to the Poor, and to withdraw any part 'of it to ones private Occaſions. He 'concludes with this excuſe, That he had

'named

'named no Perſon, he had not writ to 'reproach others; but to give them warning. And therefore ſince he had treated of the Vices of the Clergy in general Terms, if any was offended with 'him for it, he thereby plainly confeſſed 'that he himſelf was guilty.

CHAP. V.

An Account of ſome Canons *in divers Ages of the Church relating to the Duties and Labours of the Clergy.*

I Will go no further, in gathering Quotations to ſhew the ſenſe that the Fathers had in theſe matters: theſe are both ſo full and ſo expreſs, that I can find none more plain and more forcible. I ſhall to theſe add ſome of the *Canons* that have been made both in the beſt and in the worſt Ages of the Church, obliging Biſhops and other Clerks to *Reſidence* and to be contented with *one Cure*. In that at *Sardica* that met in the Year 347. conſiſting of above 350. Biſhops two Canons were made, (the 11*th* and the 12*th*) againſt *Biſhops who without any urgent neceſſity, or preſſing buſineſs, ſhould*

ſhould be abſent from their Church above three weeks, and thereby grieve the Flock, that was committed to their care: And even this proviſion was made becauſe Biſhops had Eſtates lying out of their Dioceſſes; therefore they were allowed to go and look after them, for three weeks, *in which time they were to perform the divine function in the Churches to which thoſe Eſtates belonged.*

Many proviſions were alſo made againſt ſuch as went to Court, unleſs they were called by the Emperors, or went by a Deputation from the Church upon a publick account. There is not any one thing more frequently provided againſt, than that any of the Clergy ſhould leave their Church, and go to any other Church, or live any where elſe without the Biſhops leave and conſent: nor is there any thing clearer from all the Canons of the firſt Ages, than that they conſidered the Clergy of every Church as a body of men dedicated to its ſervice, that lived upon the Oblations of the Faithful, and that was to labour in the ſeveral parts of the Eccleſiaſtical Miniſtry, as they ſhould be ordered by the Biſhop.

In the 4*th* General Council at *Calcedon Pluralities*, do firſt appear: for they are mentioned and condemned in the 10*th* Canon, which runs thus, *No Clerk ſhall at the ſame time belong to two Churches; to wit, to that in which he was was firſt ordained, and that to which as being the greater, he has gone, out of a deſire of vain glory; for ſuch as do ſo, ought to be ſent back to that Church in which they were at firſt ordained, and to ſerve there only; but if any has been tranſlated from one Church to another, he ſhall receive nothing out of his former Church; nor out of any Chapel or Alms-houſe belonging to it: and ſuch as ſhall tranſgreſs this definition of this General Council are condemned by it, to be degraded.* I go next to a worſe Scene of the Church to ſee what proviſions were made in this matter about the 8*th* Century, both in the Eaſt and in the Weſt: The worſe that thoſe Ages and Councils were, it makes the Argument the ſtronger, ſince even bad men in bad times, could not juſtifie or ſuffer ſuch an abuſe.

In the year 787. the Second Council of *Nice* was held that ſetled the worſhip of Images. The 15 Canon of it runs thus.

thus. 'No Clerk ſhall from henceforth 'be reckoned in two Churches, (for every Church had a Catalogue of its Clergy, by which the dividends were made) 'for this is the Character of Trafficking, 'and Covetouſneſs, and wholly eſtranged 'from the Eccleſiaſtical Cuſtom. We 'have heard from our Saviour's own 'words, that *no man can ſerve two Maſters: for he will either hate the one or 'love the other, or cleave to the one and 'deſpiſe the other: Let every one therefore* 'according to the Apoſtles words, *continue in the Vocation in which he is called*, and ſerve in one Church: For 'thoſe things which filthy Lucre has 'brought into Church matters are contrary to God. There is a variety of imployments, for acquiring the neceſſary 'ſupplies of this life: Let every one that 'pleaſes, make uſe of theſe, for furniſhing himſelf: For the Apoſtle ſaies 'theſe hands Miniſtred to my neceſſities', and to thoſe that were with me. This 'ſhall be the rule in this Town, which 'is guarded by God, but in remote Villages an Indulgence may be granted by 'reaſon of the want of men. It is upon this that the Canoniſts do found the

firſt

firſt of the two reaſons, for which only they allow that a Diſpenſation for holding two Benefices may be lawful, one is, the want of fit and ſufficient men for the ſervice of the Church. The foundation of the other will be found in the Canon, which I ſhall next ſet down.

It is the 49 Canon of the ſixth Council at *Paris*, under *Lewis the Good*, in the Year 829. this Council came after a great many, that had been held by *Charles the Great*, and his Son for purging out abuſes, and for reſtraining the Primitive Diſcipline. Theſe Councils ſat at *Frankfort*, *Ments*, *Aken*, *Rheims*, *Chalons*, *Tours*, *Arles*, and this of *Paris* was the laſt that was held upon that deſign. In theſe, all the Primitive Canons relating to the Lives and Labours, and the government of the Clergy, were renewed. Among others is that of *Calcedon* formerly mentioned: but it ſeems there was no occaſion given to make a ſpecial one againſt Pluralities, before this held at *Paris*, which conſiſted of four Provinces of *France*, *Reims*, *Sens*, *Tours*, and *Rouen*. The Canon runs thus: *As it becomes every City to have its proper Biſhop; ſo it*

is

is alſo becoming and neceſſary that every Church dedicated to God, ſhould have its proper Prieſt. Yet Covetouſneſs which is Idolatry (of which we are much aſhamed) has ſo got hold of ſome Prieſts and caught them captives in its Fetters, that they, blinded with it, know neither whither they go nor what they ought to be or do; ſo that they being kindled with the fire of Covetouſneſs, and forgetful of the Prieſtly Dignity, neglecting the care of thoſe Churches, to which they were promoted, do by ſome preſents given or promiſed, procure other Churches not only from Clerks, but from Lay-men, in which they do againſt Law undertake to perform the Miniſtry of Chriſt. It is not known whether their Biſhops are conſulted in this matter, or not; if they are, without doubt their Biſhops become partakers of their ſin: but if they preſume to do it without conſulting them, yet it is to be imputed to the Biſhops negligence. There is ſcarce a Prieſt to be found who warreth worthily, and diligently in that Church in which he is dedicated, to the Divine Service: but how much leſs will he be able to do that worthily in two, three or more Churches? This practice brings a reproach on the Chriſtian

*ſtian Religion, and a confuſion on the Prieſtly Order. The Covetouſneſs of the Clergy is cenſured by their people; the worſhip of God is not performed in places conſecrated to him; and as was obſerved in the former Chapters, the Souls of the people are thereby much endangered. Wherefore we do all unanimouſly appoint, that no Biſhop ſuffer this to be done in his Pariſh (*or *Dioceſs*, theſe words being uſed promiſcuouſly*) any more, and we Decree, that every Church that has a Congregation belonging to it, and has means by which it may ſubſiſt, ſhall have its proper Prieſt: for if it has a Congregation but has not Means by which it may ſubſiſt, that matter is left to the Biſhop, to conſider whether it can or ought to be ſupported or not. But it is ſpecially recommended to their care to ſee that under this pretence, no Prieſt may out of Covetouſneſs hold two or three Churches, in which he cannot ſerve, nor perform the worſhip of God.* The laſt proviſions in this Canon are the grounds upon which the *Canoniſts* found the ſecond juſt cauſe of diſpenſing with *Pluralities*, which is when a Church is ſo poor, that the Profits which ariſe out of it

it cannot afford a competent maintenance to a Clark: but then the queſtion ariſes what is a *Competent Maintenance*: this, they do all bring very low, to that which can juſt maintain him: and they have ſo clogged it, that no pretence ſhould be given by ſo general a word, to *Covetouſneſs*, *Voluptuouſneſs*, or *Ambition*. And indeed while we have ſo many poor Churches among us, inſtead of reſtraining ſuch Pluralities, it were rather to be wiſhed that it were made eaſier than by Law it is at preſent; either to unite them together, or to make one man capable of ſerving two Churches, when both Benefices make but a tolerable ſubſiſtance, rather than to be forced to have a greater number of Clerks, than can be decently maintained; ſince it is certain, that it is more for the Intereſt of Religion and for the good of Souls, to have one worthy man ſerving two Churches, and dividing himſelf between them; than to have Clerks for many Benefices, whoſe ſcandalous proviſions, make too many ſcandalous incumbents, which is one of the greateſt Diſeaſes and Miſeries of this Church.

But

But a due care in this matter has no relation to the accumulation of Livings, at great diſtances, (every one of which can well ſupport an Incumbent) upon the ſame Perſon merely for the making of a Family, for the ſupporting of Luxury or Vanity, or for other baſe and Covetous deſigns. But I go next to two of the worſt Councils that ever carried the name of *General ones*, the third and the fourth of the *Lateran* that we may ſee what was the ſenſe of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century in this matter; notwithſtanding the Corruption of thoſe Ages. The Thirteenth Canon of the Third *Lateran Council*, runs thus. 'Foraſmuch, as ſome 'whoſe Covetouſneſs has no bounds, en-'deavour to procure to themſelves divers 'Eccleſiaſtical Dignities, and ſeveral Pa-'riſh Churches, againſt the Proviſions of 'the Holy Canons; by which means, tho 'they are ſcarce able to perform the Of-'fice of one, they do claim the Provi-'ſions due to many: We do ſeverely re-'quire, that this may not be done for 'the future: And therefore, when any 'Church or Eccleſiaſtical Miniſtry is to 'be given, let ſuch a one be ſought out 'for

'for it, as ſhall reſide upon the place, 'and ſhall be able to diſcharge the Care 'in his own Perſon: If otherwiſe, he 'who receives any ſuch benefice, contrary 'to the Canons, ſhall loſe it, and he who 'gave it ſhall likewiſe loſe his right of 'Patronage. This Canon not being found effectual to cure ſo great an abuſe. The Twenty Ninth Canon of the Fourth *Councel* in the *Lateran*, was penned in theſe Words. 'It was with great Care forbid-'den in the *Conucil* of the *Lateran*, 'that any one ſhould have divers Ec-'cleſiaſtical Dignities, and more Pariſh 'Churches than one, which is contrary 'to the Holy Canons. Otherwiſe, he 'that took them ſhould loſe them, and 'he that gave them ſhould loſe the right 'of giving them: But by reaſon of ſome 'Mens Preſumption and Covetouſneſs, 'that Decree has had little or no effect 'hitherto; we therefore deſiring to make 'a more evident and expreſs Proviſion 'againſt theſe abuſes, do appoint that 'whoſoever ſhall receive any Benefice, 'to which a Care of Souls is annexed, 'ſhall thereupon by Law be deprived of 'any other ſuch Benefice, that he for-'merly had; and if he endeavours ſtill

'to

'to hold it, he shall lose the other likewise; and he to whom the right of the 'Patronage of his first Benefice did belong, is empowered to bestow it upon his 'accepting another; and if he delays the 'bestowing it, above Three months, not 'only shall his right devolve to another, 'according to the Decree of the Council 'in the *Lateran*, but he shall be obliged 'to restore to the Church, to which the 'Benefice belongs, all that which he himself received during the vacancy. This 'we do likewise Decree as to Personages; 'and do further appoint that no Man 'shall presume to hold more Dignities 'or Parsonages than one in the same 'Church, even though they have no Cure 'of Souls annexed to them. Provided 'always that Dispensations may be granted by the *Apostolical See*, to Persons of 'high Birth, or eminently learned (*sublimes & literatas personas*) or dignified in Universities, for so the word *literati* was understood, who upon occasion may be honoured, with greater 'Benefices. It was by this last Proviso, that this as well as all other Canons, made against these Abuses became quite ineffectual; for this had no other effect, but the

the obliging People to go to *Rome* for *Diſpenſations*; ſo that *this* Canon inſtead of reforming the Abuſe, did really eſtabliſh it, for the Qualifications here mentioned were ſo far ſtretched, that any Perſon that had obtained a Degree in any Univerſity, came within the Character of *lettered* or learned, and all thoſe that were in any dependance upon *great Men*, came likewiſe within the other Qualification of *high Rank and Birth.*

This was the Practice among us, during the Reign of *Henry* the *8th.* and he when he was beginning to threaten the *See of Rome*, in the matter of his *Divorce*, got that Act to be paſſed, which has been the occaſion of ſo much Scandal and Diſorder in this Church. It ſeems to one that conſiders it well, that the Clauſes which qualifie *Pluralities* were grafted upon another Bill againſt *Spiritual Perſons taking Eſtates to Farm*, with which that Act begins: And that in the carrying that on, ſuch a temper ſhewed it ſelf, that the other was added to it. It contained indeed a Limitation of the *Papal* Authority, but ſo many Proviſions were made, that the *Nobility*,

Clergy, and the more eminent of the *Gentry*, *Knights* in particular, were ſo taken Care of, that it could meet with no great Oppoſition in the Parliament; but from the ſtate of that Time, and from ſeveral Clauſes in the Act it ſelf, it appears, it was only intended to be a Proviſional Act; tho it is conceived in the Style of a perpetual Law. By it then, and by it only (for I have not been able to find that any ſuch Act ever paſſed in any Kingdom or State in *Chriſtendom*, many having been made plainly to the contrary in *France*, declaring the Obligation to *Reſidence* to be of *Divine Right*) were the Abuſes, that had ariſen out of the Canon of one of the worſt Councils that ever was, authoriſed and ſettled among us; as far as a Law of the Land can ſettle them. But after all, it is to be conſidered that a Law does indeed change the Legal and Political Nature of things, it gives a Title to a Free-hold and Property: But no Humane Law can change the Moral or Divine Laws, and cancel their Authority. If a *falſe Religion* is ſettled by Law, it becomes indeed the *legal Religion*; but is not a whit

whit the *truer* for that. And therefore, if the Laws of the Goſpel oblige Clerks to Perſonal Labour, as was formerly made out; *An Act of Parliament* may indeed qualifie a Man, in *Law*, to enjoy the *Benefice*, whether he labours in it or not, but it can never diſſolve his Obligation to *Reſidence* and *Perſonal* Labour.

But to bring this Chapter to an end, I ſhall only add Three Decrees that were made by the Council of *Trent*, in this matter, that ſo it may appear what Proviſions they made againſt Abuſes, which are ſtill ſupported by Laws among us: A part of the *1ſt:* Chap. of Reformation that paſt in the Sixth Seſſion, runs thus: 'This Synod admoniſhes all that are ſet over any 'Cathedral Churches, by what Title ſo-'ever, that they taking heed to them-'ſelves, and to all the Flock, over 'which the Holy Ghoſt has ſet them, 'to Govern the Church of God, which 'he has purchaſed with his own Blood, 'do watch and labour and fullfil their 'Miniſtry, as the Apoſtle has com-'manded: And they muſt know that 'they cannot do this, if as Hirelings

'they forſake the Flock committed to 'them, and do not watch over thoſe 'Sheep, whoſe Blood will be required at 'their Hands, in the laſt Day. Since it 'is certain that nō excuſe will be received, 'if the Wolfe devours the Sheep, when 'the Shepherd does not look after them. 'Yet ſince to our great Grief it is 'found, that ſome at this time neglect 'the Salvation of their own Souls, and 'preferring Earthy things to Heaven-'ly, are ſtill about Courts, and forſa-'king the Fold, and the Care of the 'Sheep truſted to them, do give them-'ſelves wholly to Earthly and Temporal 'Cares; therefore all the Ancient Ca-'nons, which by the Iniquity of Times, 'and the Corruptions of Men were fal-'len into deſuetude, are renewed againſt '*Non reſidents.* To which, ſeveral com-'pulſory Clauſes are added, which are indeed ſlight ones, becauſe the Execu-tion of them was intirely put in the Pope's Power, and the Puniſhment did only lie, if a Biſhop was abſent Six Months in a Year.

This Decree did not ſatisfie thoſe who moved for a Reformation: ſo a fuller one was made in the 23*d.* Seſſion, 1*ſt. Chap.* in

in theſe Words: 'Whereas, by the Law 'of God, all thoſe to whom the Care 'of Souls is committed, are commanded 'to know their Sheep, to offer Sacri-'fice for them, to feed them by the 'Preaching of the Word of God, the 'Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, and 'by the Example of a good Life, 'to have a tender Care of the poor, 'and all other miſerable Perſons, and to 'lay themſelves out upon all the other 'Functions of the Paſtoral Care; which 'cannot be performed by thoſe, who 'do not watch over, nor are preſent 'with their Flock: Therefore this Sy-'nod does admoniſh and exhort them, 'that they remembring the Divine Pre-'cepts, and being made an Example to 'their Flock, may feed and govern them 'in Righteouſneſs and Truth. Upon 'this they declare that all Biſhops, even 'Cardinals themſelves, are obliged to 'Perſonal Reſidence, in their Church 'and Dioceſs, and there to diſcharge 'their Duty: Unleſs upon ſome ſpecial 'Proviſions. By which indeed a Door is opened to as many Corruptions as the Court of *Rome* thinks fit to diſpenſe with. Yet without this, none may

be abſent above two, or at moſt, three Months, in the whole Year; and even that muſt be upon a juſt reaſon, and without any prejudice to the Flock; 'and they leave this upon the Conſcien-'ces of ſuch as withdraw for ſo long a 'time, which they hope will be Reli-'gious and Tender in this matter, ſince 'all Hearts are known to God, and it is 'no ſmall Sin to do his Work negligently. They declare the breaking this Decree to be a *Mortal Sin*, and that ſuch as are guilty of it, cannot with a good Conſcience enjoy the mean Profits, during ſuch their Abſence; but are bound to lay them out on the Fabrick, or give them to the Poor: and all theſe Proviſions and Puniſhments, they do alſo make againſt the inferior Clergy, that enjoyed any Benefice, to which the Cure of Souls was annexed, and the execution of that, is put in the Biſhop's Hands, who is required not to diſpenſe with their *Reſidence*, unleſs upon a very weighty occaſion, above two Months; and in this they give the Biſhop ſo full an Authority, that no Appeal or Prohibition was to lie againſt his Sentence, upon *non-Reſidents*, even in the Court of *Rome*. In theſe

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Decrees, tho the Papal Party hindred a formal Declaration of the Obligation to *Reſidence*, by *Divine Right*, that ſo room might ſtill be left for the *Diſpenſing Power*; yet they went very near it, they applied Paſſages of Scripture to it, and laid the charge of *mortal Sin* upon it.

In the laſt place, I ſhall ſet down the Decree that was made in the 24*th*. Seſſion, *Chap.* 17. againſt Pluralities, in theſe Words: 'Whereas the Eccleſiaſtical Order is perverted, when one Clerk 'has the Offices of many committed to 'him, it was therefore well provided by 'the Holy Canons, that no Man ſhould 'be put in two Churches. But many led 'by their depraved Covetouſneſs, deceiving themſelves, but not God, are 'not aſhamed to elude thoſe good Conſtitutions, by ſeveral Artifices, and obtain more Benefices than one at the 'ſame time: Therefore the *Synod* being 'deſirous to reſtore a proper Diſcipline 'for the Government of Churches, does, 'by this Decree, by which all Perſons, 'of what Rank ſoever, even Cardinals 'themſelves, ſhall be bound; appoint, 'that for the future, one Man ſhall be 'capable of receiving only one Eccleſi-

'aſtical Benefice. But if that is not ſuf-
'ficient for the decent maintenance of
'him that has it, then it ſhall be lawful
'to give him another *ſimple Benefice*, pro-
'vided that both Benefices do not require
'*Perſonal Reſidence.* This Rule muſt be
'applied not only to Cathedrals, but to
'all other Benefices whether Secular, Re-
'gular, or ſuch as are held by Commen-
'dam, or of what ſort or order ſoever
'they may be. And as for ſuch as do
'at preſent poſſeſs either more Pariſh-
'Churches than one, or one Cathedral,
'and another Pariſh-Church, they ſhall
'be forced notwithſtanding of any Di-
'ſpenſations or Unions that may have
'been granted them, for term of Life,
'to reſign within the ſpace of Six Months,
'all that they do now hold, except one
'Cathedral, or one Parochial Church;
'otherwiſe, all their Benefices, whether
'Parochial, or others, ſhall be by Law
'eſteemed void; and as ſuch they ſhall
'be diſpoſed of to others. Nor may thoſe
'who formerly enjoyed them, receive the
'mean Profits, after the term of Six
'Months, with a good Conſcience. But
'the Synod wiſhes that ſome due Provi-
'ſion might be made, ſuch as the Pope

'ſhall

'shall think fit, for the necessities of 'those who are hereby obliged to Re-'sign.

These were the decrees that were made by that *pretended general Council:* And whereſoever that Council is received, they are so seldom dispensed with, that the Scandal of *Non-Residence*, or *Plurality*, does no more cry in that Church. In *France*, tho that *Council* is not there received, yet such regard is had to Primitive Rules, that it is not heard of among them. Such Examples are to us Reproaches indeed: And that of the worst sort, when the Argument from the neglect of the Pastoral Care, which gave so great an Advantage at first to the Reformers, and turned the Hearts of the World so much from their Careless Pastors to those who shewed more Zeal and Concern for them, is now against us, and lies the other way. If the Nature of Man is so made, that it is not possible, but that *Offences must come*, yet, *woe be to him, by whom they come.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the declared Senſe and Rules of the Church *of* England *in this matter.*

WHatſoever may be the practice of any among us, and whatſoever may be the force of ſome Laws that were made in bad times, and perhaps upon bad ends, yet we are ſure the Senſe of our Church is very different; She intended to raiſe the obligation of the Paſtoral Care higher than it was before: and has laid out this matter more fully and more ſtrictly, than any Church ever did, in any Age; as far at leaſt as my Enquiries can carry me. The trueſt Indication of the Senſe of a Church is to be taken from her Language, in her *Publick Offices*: This is that which ſhe ſpeaks the moſt frequently,

quently, and the moſt publickly: even the *Articles of Doctrine* are not ſo much read and ſo often heard, as her *Liturgies* are: and as this way of Reaſoning has been of late made uſe of with great advantage, againſt the *Church of Rome*, to make her accountable, for all her *Publick Offices* in their plain and literal meaning; ſo I will make uſe of it on this occaſion: It is the ſtronger in our caſe, whoſe Offices being in a Tongue underſtood by the people, the Argument from them does more evidently conclude here.

In general then this is to be obſerved, that no Church before ours, at the *Reformation*, took a formal *Sponſion at* the *Altar*, from ſuch as were ordained *Deacons* and *Prieſts*. That was indeed always demanded of Biſhops, but neither in the *Roman* nor *Greek Pontifical*, do we find any ſuch ſolemn Vows and Promiſes demanded or made by Prieſts or Deacons, nor does any print of this appear in the *Conſtitutions*, the pretended *Areopagite*, or the antient *Canons of the Church*. Biſhops were asked many queſtions, as appears by the firſt Canon of the fourth Council of *Carthage*.

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They were required to profess their Faith, and to promise to obey the *Canons*, which is still observed in the *Greek Church.* The questions are more express in the Roman Pontifical, and the first of these demands a promise *that they will instruct their people* in the Christian Doctrine, according *to the Holy Scriptures*: which was the Foundation upon which our Bishops justified the Reformation; Since the first and chief of all their Vowes binding them to this, it was to take place of all others; and if any other parts of those Sponsions, contradicted this, such as their Obedience and Adherence to the See of *Rome*, they said that these were to be limited by this.

All the account I can give of this general practice of the Church in demanding Promises only of *Bishops*, and not of the other *Orders* is this, that they considered the Government of the *Priests* and *Deacons*, as a thing that was so entirely in the *Bishop*, as it was indeed by the first Constitution, that it was not thought necessary to bind them to their Duty by any Publick Vowes or Promises (though it is very probable

probable that the *Bishops* might take private engagements of them, before they ordained them) it being in the *Bishop*'s power to Restrain and Censure them in a very Absolute and Summary way. But the case was quite different in *Bishops*, who were all equal by their *Rank* and *Order*: None having any Authority over them, by any Divine Law or the Rules of the Gospel: the power of Primates, and Metropolitans having arisen out of Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws, and not being equally great in all Countries and Provinces: and therefore it was more necessary to proceed with greater caution, and to demand a further security from them.

But the new face of the Constitution of the Church, by which *Priests* were not under so absolute a subjection to their *Bishops*, as they had been at first, which was occasioned partly, by the Tyranny of some *Bishops*, to which bounds were set by Laws and *Canons*, partly by their having a special Propety and *Benefice* of their own, and so not being maintained by a Dividend out of the common-stock of the Church

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as as firſt; had ſo altered the ſtate of things, that indeed no part of the Epiſcopacy was left entrirely in the *Biſhop*'s hands, but the power of Ordination. This is ſtill free and unreſtrained: no *Writs*, nor *Prohibitions* from *Civil Courts*; and no *Appeals* have clogged or fettered this, as they have done all the other parts of their Authority. Therefore our Reformers obſerving all this, took great care in Reforming the *Office* of *Ordination*, and they made both the Charge that is given, and the Promiſes that are to be taken, to be very expreſs and ſolemne, that ſo both the *Ordainers* and the *Ordained* might be rightly inſtructed in their Duty and ſtruck with the awe and dread, that they ought to be under in ſo holy and ſo important a performance: and though all mankind does eaſily enough agree in this, That Promiſes ought to be Religiouſly obſerved, which men make to one another, how apt ſoever they may be to break them; yet to make the ſenſe of theſe Promiſes go deeper, they are ordered to be made at the *Altar*, and in the nature of a *Stipulation* or Covenant, the Church conferring *Orders*;

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or indeed rather, Chriſt by the Miniſtry of the Officers that he has conſtituted, conferring them upon thoſe *Promiſes* that are firſt made. The Forms of Ordination in the *Greek Church*, which we have reaſon to believe are leſs changed, and more conform to the Primitive patterns, than thoſe uſed by the *Latins*, do plainly import that the Church only declared the Divine Vocation. *The Grace of God, that perfects the feeble, and heals the weak, promotes this man to be a Deacon, a Prieſt or a Biſhop*: Where nothing is expreſſed as *conferred* but only as *declared*, ſo our Church by making our *Saviour's words*, the form of Ordination, muſt be conſtrued to intend, by that that it is Chriſt only that ſends, and that the *Biſhops* are only his Miniſters to pronounce his Miſſion; otherwiſe it is not ſo eaſie to juſtifie the uſe of this Form, *Receive the Holy Ghoſt*: which as it was not uſed in the Primitive Church nor by the Roman, till within theſe five Hundred Years, ſo in that Church, it is not the Form of Ordination but a Benediction given by the *Biſhop* ſingly, after the Orders are given by the *Biſhop*

shop and the other *Priests* joyning with him. For this is done by him alone as the final consummation of the Action. But our using this as the form of Ordination shews, that we consider our selves only as the Instruments that speak in Christ's Name and Words: Insinuating thereby that he only Ordains. Pursuant to this in the Ordaining of *Priests*, the questions are put *in the name of God and of his Church.* Which makes the answers to them to be of the nature of *Vows* and *Oaths*. So that if men do make conscience of any thing, and if it is possible to strike terrour into them, the Forms of our *Ordinations* are the most effectually contrived for that end that could have been framed.

The first question that is put in the *Office of Deacons*, is, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this Office, to serve God for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his people?* To which he is to answer *I trust so.* This is put only in this *Office*, and not repeated afterwards: it being justly supposed that where one has had this motion, all the other

other Orders may be in time conferred purſuant to it; but this is the firſt ſtep, by which a Man dedicates himſelf to the Service of God; and therefore it ought not to be made by any, that has not this Divine Vocation. Certainly, the *Anſwer* that is made to this, ought to be well conſidered; for if any ſays, *I truſt ſo*, that yet knows nothing of any ſuch *motion*, and can give no account of it, he *lies* to the *Holy Ghoſt*; and makes his firſt approach to the Altar, with a *lie* in his Mouth; and that not to *Men*, but to *God*; and how can one expect to be received by *God*, or be *ſent* and *ſealed* by him, that dares do a thing of ſo crying a Nature, as to pretend that he truſts he has this *motion*, who knows that he has it not, who has made no Reflections on it, and when asked, what he means by it, can ſay nothing concerning it, and yet he dares venture to come and ſay it to *God* and his *Church*: If a Man pretends a *Commiſſion* from a *Prince*, or indeed from any Perſon, and acts in his *Name* upon it, the Law will fall on him, and puniſh him, and ſhall

the *Great God of Heaven and Earth*, be thus vouched, and his *motion* he pretended to, by thoſe whom he has neither *called* nor *ſent*? and ſhall not he reckon with thoſe who dare to run without his *Miſſion*, pretending that they *truſt* they have it, when perhaps they underſtand not the Importance of it, nay, and perhaps ſome laugh at it, as an Enthuſiaſtical Queſtion, who, yet will go through with the *Office*? They come to Chriſt for the *Loaves*: They hope to live by the *Altar*, and the *Goſpel*, how little ſoever they *ſerve* at the one, or *Preach* the other; therefore they will ſay any thing, that is neceſſary for qualifying them to this whether true or falſe. It cannot be denied, but that this Queſtion carries a ſound in it, that ſeems a little too high, and that may rather raiſe Scruples, as importing ſomewhat that is not ordinary, and that ſeems to ſavour of *Enthuſiaſme*; and therefore it was put here, without doubt, to give great caution to ſuch as come to the Service of the Church; many may be able to anſwer it truly according

cording to the Senſe of the Church, who may yet have great doubting in themſelves concerning it; but every Man that has it not, muſt needs know that he has it not.

The true meaning of it muſt be reſolved thus; the Motives that ought to determine a Man, to dedicate himſelf to the Miniſtring in the Church, are a Zeal for promoting the Glory of God, for raiſing the Honour of the Chriſtian Religion, for the making it to be better underſtood, and more ſubmitted to. He that loves it, and feels the excellency of it in himſelf, that has a due Senſe of God's goodneſs in it to Mankind, and that is entirely poſſeſſed with that, will feel a Zeal within himſelf, for communicating that to others; that ſo *the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he has ſent*, may be more univerſally glorified, and ſerved by his Creatures: And when to this he has added a concern for the Souls of Men, a Tenderneſs for them, a Zeal to reſcue them from endleſs Miſery, and a deſire to put them in the way to everlaſting Happineſs, and from

theſe Motives feels in himſelf a deſire to dedicate his Life and Labours to thoſe ends; and in order to them ſtudies to underſtand the Scriptures, and more particularly, the *New Teſtament*, that from thence he may form a true Notion of this Holy Religion, and ſo be *an able Miniſter of it*; this Man, and only this Man, ſo *moved* and ſo qualified, can in Truth, and with a good Conſcience anſwer, that he *truſts he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt.* And every one that ventures on the ſaying it, without this, is a *Sacrilegious profaner* of the Name of *God*, and of his *Holy Spirit.* He breaks in upon his Church, not to *feed* it but to rob it: And it is certain that he who begins with a Lie, may be ſent by the *Father of Lies*, but he cannot be thought to enter in, by the Door, who prevaricates in the firſt word that he ſays in order to his Admittance.

But if the Office of *Deacons* offers no other particular matter of Reflection, the Office of Ordaining *Prieſts*, has a great deal; indeed the whole of it, is calculated to the beſt Notions of the beſt

beſt Times. In the Charge that is given, the Figures of *Watchmen, Shepherds,* and *Stewards,* are purſued, and the places of Scripture relating to theſe are applied to them: *They are required to have always printed in their Remembrance; How great a Treaſure was committed to their Charge: The Church and Congregation whom you muſt ſerve is his Spouſe and Body. Then the greatneſs of the fault of their Negligence, and the horrible Puniſhment that will follow upon it, is ſet before them, in caſe the Church or any Member of it take any hurt or hinderance by reaſon of it: They are charged never to ceaſe their Labour, Care and Diligence, till they have done all that lieth in them, according to their bounden Duty, towards all ſuch, as are, or ſhall be committed to their Care, to bring them to a Ripeneſs and Perfectneſs of Age in Chriſt.* They are again urged to *conſider with what care and ſtudy, they ought to apply themſelves to this; to pray earneſtly for Gods Holy Spirit, and to be ſtudious in Reading and Learning of the Scriptures; and to forſake and ſet aſide,*

as much as they may, all Worldly Cares and Studies. It is hoped that they have clearly determined by Gods Grace, to give themſelves wholly to this Vocation: and as much as lieth in them to apply themſelves wholly to this one thing; and to draw all their Cares and Studies this way, and to this end; and that by their daily reading and weighing the Scriptures, they will ſtudy to wax riper and ſtronger in their Miniſtry. Theſe are ſome of the words of the preparatory *Charge* given by the Biſhop, when he enters upon this Office; before he puts the queſtions that follow to thoſe, who are to be ordained. What greater force or energy could be put in Words, than is in theſe? Or where could any be found that are more weighty and more expreſs; to ſhew the intire Dedication of the *whole Man*, of his *Time* and *Labours*, and the *ſeparating himſelf from all other Cares to follow this one thing with all poſſible Application and Zeal?* There is nothing in any Office, Ancient or Modern, that I ever ſaw which is of this *force*, ſo ſerious and ſo ſolemn; and it plainly im-

implies not only the *Senſe* of the *Church* upon this whole matter, but likewiſe their deſign who framed it, to oblige *Prieſts*, notwithſtanding any Relaxation that the Laws of the Land had ſtill favoured, by the firmeſt and ſacredſt bonds poſſible to attend upon their *Flocks*; and to do their Duties to them. For a bare *Reſidence*, without labouring, is but a mock *Reſidence*, ſince the obligation to it, is in order to a further end; that they may *watch over*, and *feed their Flock*, and not enjoy their Benefices only as Farms, or as *Livings*, according to the groſs, but common abuſe of our Language, by which the Names of *Cures*, *Pariſhes*, or *Benefices*, which are the Eccleſiaſtical Names, are now ſwallowed up into that of *Living*, which carries a carnal Idea in the very ſound of the word, and I doubt a more carnal effect on the minds of both Clergy and Laity.

What ever we may be, our Church is free of this Reproach: ſince this Charge carries their Duty as high, and as home, as any thing that can be laid in Words. And it is further to

be conſidered, that this is not of the Nature of a private Exhortation, in which a Man of lively thoughts, and a warm fancy, may be apt to carry a point too high: It is the conſtant and uniform voice of the Church. Nor is it of the nature of a Charge, which is only the Senſe of him that gives it, and to which the Perſon to whom it is given, is only Paſſive: He hears it, but cannot be bound by another Man's Thoughts or Words, further than as the Nature of things binds him. But *Orders* are of the nature of a *Covenant* between *Chriſt* and the *Clerks*; in which ſo many Privileges and Powers are granted on the one part, and ſo many Duties and *Offices* are promiſed on the other; and this *Charge* being the Preface to it, it is *ſtipulatory*. It declares the whole *Covenant* of both ſides; and ſo thoſe who receive *Orders* upon it, are as much bound by every part of it, and it becomes as much their own Act, as if they had pronounced or promiſed it all, in the moſt formal Words that could be, and indeed the *Anſwers* and *Promiſes* that are afterwards made, are only the Application of this, to the

the particular Perſons, for giving them a plainer and livelier Senſe of their Obligation, which yet, in it ſelf, was as intire and ſtrong, whether they had made any promiſe by Words of their own or not.

But to put the matter out of doubt, let us look a little further into the *Office*, to the Promiſes that they make, with relation to their *Flock*, even to ſuch *as are, or ſhall be committed to their Charge.* They promiſe, *That by the Help of the Lord they will give their Faithful Diligence, always ſo to Miniſter the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Diſcipline of Chriſt, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realm hath received the ſame, according to the Commandment of God; ſo that they may teach the People committed to their Care and Charge with all Diligence to keep and obſerve the ſame.* This does plainly bind to perſonal Labour, the mention that is made of *what this Realm has received*, being limited by what follows *according to the commandment of God*, ſhews that by this is meant the *Reformation* of the Doctrine and Worſhip that was then received,

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and eſtabliſhed by Law; by which theſe general Words, *The Doctrine and Sacraments and Diſcipline of Chriſt*, to which all Parties pretend, are determined to our Conſtitution; ſo that tho there were ſome Diſorders among us, not yet provided againſt by the *Laws of the Land*; this does not ſecure a reſerve for them. This is ſo ſlight a remark, that I ſhould be aſhamed to have made it, if it had not been urged to my ſelf, ſlight as it is, to juſtifie in point of Conſcience, the claiming all ſuch Privileges, or Qualifications, as are ſtill allowed by *Law*. But I go on to the other Promiſes: The Clerk ſays *he will, by the help of God, be ready with all Faithful Diligence, to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word, and to uſe both publick and private Admonitions, and Exhortations, as well to the ſick, as to the whole, within his Cure, as need ſhall require, and as occaſion ſhall be given*: This is as plainly perſonal, and conſtant, as Words can make any thing. And in this is expreſſed the ſo much neglected, but ſo neceſſary Duty, which Incumbents owe their Flock, in a *private way*, viſiting,

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inſtructing, and admoniſhing them, which is one of the moſt uſeful, and important parts of their Duty, how generally ſoever it may be diſuſed or forgotten: Theſe being the chief inſtances and acts of *watching over and feeding the Flock*, that is committed to their *Care*. In the next place they promiſe, *That they will be diligent in Prayers, and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in ſuch Studies as help to the Knowledge of the ſame, laying aſide, the ſtudy of the World and the Fleſh:* This ſtill carries on that great Notion of the *Paſtoral Care*, which runs through this whole *Office*; that it is to be a Man's intire Buſineſs, and is to poſſeſs both his thoughts and his time. They do further promiſe *That they will maintain, and ſet forward, as much as lieth in them, quietneſs, peace, and love among all Chriſtian People, and eſpecially among them, that are, or ſhall be committed to their Charge.*

Theſe are the Vows and Promiſes that Prieſts make before they can be Ordained: And to compleat the Stipulation, the *Biſhop* concludes it, with a Prayer to God *who has given them the will to do all theſe things, to give them*

alſo

also strength, and power to perform the same: that he may accomplish his Work, which he hath begun in them, until the time that he shall come, at the latter day, to judge the quick and the dead. Upon the whole matter either this is all a piece of gross and impudent *Pageantry*, dressed up in grave and lofty Expressions, to strike upon the weaker part of Mankind, and to furnish the rest with matter to their profane and impious Scorn; or it must be confessed that *Priests* come under the most formal and express Engagements, to constant and diligent *labour*, that can be possibly contrived or set forth in Words. It is upon this, that they are Ordained: So their *Ordination* being the consummation of this *compact*, it must be acknowledged that according to the nature of all mutual *compacts*; a total failure on the one side, does also dissolve all the Obligation that lay on the other: And therefore those who do not perform their part, that do not *Reside* and *Labour*, they do also in the sight of God, forfeit all the *Authority* and *Privileges* that do follow their *Orders*, as much as a *Christian* at large, that does not perform his

his *Baptismal Vow*, forfeits the Rights and Benefits of his Baptism, in the sight of God; tho both in the one, and in the other, it is necessary that for the preventing of disorder and confusion, a Sentence Declaratory of *Excommunication*, in the one, as of *Degradation* in the other, pass before the Visible Acts and Rights, pursuant to those Rites, can be denied.

To all this I will add one thing more, which is, that since our Book of Ordination, is a part of our *Liturgy*, and likewise a part of the *Law* of the *Land*, and since constant Attendance, and diligent Labour is made necessary by it, and since this Law is subsequent to the Act of the 21*st.* of *Henry* the 8*th.* that qualifies so many for *Pluralities*, and *Non-Residence*, and is in plain Terms contrary to it, this as subsequent does repeal all that it contradicts: It is upon all this, a matter that to me seems plain, that by this Law, the other is Repealed, in so far, as it is inconsistent with it. This Argument is by this Consideration made the stronger, that the Act of King *Henry* does not *enact* that such things shall be, but

but only reſerves *privildeges* for ſuch as may be capable of an Exemption from the common and general rules. Now by the Principles of Law, all *Priviledges* or Exemptions of that ſort, are *odious things*; and the *Conſtructions of Law* lying hard and heavy againſt *odious Caſes*, it appears to me according to the general grounds of *Law*, very probable (I ſpeak within bounds, when I ſay only *probable*) that the Act of Uniformity which makes the *Offices of Ordination* a part of the *Law* of *England*, is a Repeal of that part of the Act of King *Henry*, which qualifies for *Pluralities*. To conclude, Whatſoever may be the ſtrength of this Plea in Bar to that Act, if our *Faith* given to *God* and his *Church*, in the moſt expreſs and plaineſt words poſſible, does bind, if *Promiſes* given at the *Altar* do oblige, and if a *Stipulation*, in the conſideration of which *Orders* are *given*, *is* ſacred and of an indiſpenſible obligation, then, I am ſure, this is.

To make the whole matter yet the ſtronger, this Office is to be compleated with a *Communion*: So that upon this

this occaſion, that is not only a piece of Religious Devotion, accompanying it; but it is the taking the *Sacrament* upon the *Stipulation* that has been made, between the Prieſt and the Church: So that thoſe who have framed this Office, have certainly intended by all the ways that they could think on, and by the weightieſt words they could chooſe, to make the ſenſe of the *Prieſtly Function*, and of the *Duties* belonging to it, give deep and ſtrong impreſſions to ſuch as are *Ordained*. I have compared with it, all the Exhortations that are in all the Offices I could find, *Ancient* and *Modern*, whether of the *Greek* or the *Latin* Church, and this muſt be ſaid of *Ours*, without any ſort of partiality to our own *Forms*, that no ſort of compariſon can be made between *Ours* and all the others: and that as much as *ours* is more ſimple than thoſe as to its *Rites and Ceremonies*, which ſwell up other *Offices*, ſo much is it more grave and weighty in the *Exhortations*, *Collects* and *Sponſions* that are made in it. In the Roman Pontifical no promiſes are demanded of *Prieſts*, but only

only that of *Obedience*: *Bishops* in a corrupted state of the Church, taking care only of their own Authority, while they neglected more important obligations.

In the *Office* of *Consecrating Bishops*; as all the *Sponsions* made by them, when they were ordained *Priests*, are to be considered as still binding, since the Inferiour *Office* does still subsist in the Superiour; so there are new *ones* superadded, proportioned to the exaltation of *Dignity* and *Authority* that accompanies that *Office*. In the *Roman Pontifical*, there are indeed questions put to a Bishop, before he is Consecrated: but of all these the first only is that which has any relation to his *Flock*: which is in these words: *Wilt thou teach the people over whom thou art to be set, both by thy Example and Doctrine: those things that thou learnst out of the Holy Scripture?* All the rest are general, and relate only to his Conversation; but not at all to his *Labours* in his *Diocess*: Whereas on the contrary, the engagements in our *Office* do regard not only a Bishop's own *Conversation*, but chiefly his Duty to

his

his People: he declares that *he is determined to inſtruct the People committed to his Charge, out of the Holy Scriptures:* That *he will ſtudy them, ſo as to be able by them, to teach and exhort, with wholſome Doctrine; and withſtand and convince the Gain-ſayers:* That *he will be ready with all faithful Diligence, to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange Doctrine, contrary to God's word: And both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the ſame:* That *he will maintain and ſet forward as much as lies in him; quietneſs, love, and peace among all Men; and correct and puniſh ſuch as be unquiet, diſobedient, and criminous, within his Dioceſs: According to ſuch Authority as he has.* In particular, *He promiſes to be Faithful in ordaining, ſending, or laying Hands upon others: He promiſes alſo to ſhew himſelf to be gentle, and merciful for Chriſt's ſake, to poor and needy People, and to all Strangers deſtitute of Help.* Theſe are the Covenants and Promiſes under which *Biſhops* are put, which are again reinforced upon them, in the Charge that is given immediately after their Conſecration, when the Bible is

put in their Hands; *Give heed to Reading, Exhortation, and Doctrine: Think upon the things contained in this Book; be diligent in them, that the increaſe coming thereby may be manifeſt unto all Men. Take heed unto thy Self, and to Doctrine, and be diligent in doing them, for by doing this thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf and them that hear thee. Be thou to the Flock of Chriſt, a Shepherd, not a Wolf; feed them, devour them not: Hold up the weak, heal the ſick, bind up the broken, bring again the out-caſts, ſeek the loſt: Be ſo merciful that you be not too remiſs: So Miniſter Diſcipline that you forget not Mercy: That when the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, you may receive the never fading Crown of Glory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* In theſe Words, the great Lines of our Duty are drawn, in very expreſſive and comprehenſive Terms. We have the ſeveral Branches of our Function, both as to Preaching and Governing very ſolemnly laid upon us: And both in this *Office* as well as in all the other *Offices* that I have ſeen, it appears that the conſtant ſence of all Churches, in all Ages, has been that *Preaching* was the Biſhops *great Duty*, and that

that he ought to lay himſelf out in it moſt particularly.

I ſhall only add one advice to all this, before I leave this Article of the Sence of our *Church* in this matter; both to thoſe, who intend to take *Orders*, and to thoſe who have already taken them. As for ſuch as do intend to dedicate themſelves to the ſervice of the Church, they ought to read over theſe *Offices* frequently; and to ask themſelves ſolemnly, as in the preſence of God, Whether they can with a good Conſcience, make thoſe anſwers which the Book preſcribes, or not? and not to venture on offering themſelves to *Oders*, till they know that they dare and may ſafely do it. Every perſon who looks that way, ought at leaſt on every Ordination Sunday, after he has once formed the reſolution of dedicating himſelf to this work, to go over the Office ſeriouſly with himſelf, and to conſider in what diſpoſition or preparation of mind he is; ſuitable to what he finds laid down in it. But I ſhould add to this, that for a Year before he comes to be *ordained*, he ſhould every firſt Sunday of the Month read over

the Office very deliberately; and frame reſolutions, conform to the ſeveral parts of it, and if he can, receive the Sacrament upon it, with a ſpecial ſet of private Devotions relating to his intentions. As the time of his *Ordination* draws near, he ought to return the oftner to thoſe exerciſes. It will be no hard task for him to read theſe over every Sunday, during the laſt Quarter before his *Ordination*; and to do that yet more ſolemnly, every day of the week in which he is to be *ordained*: and to joyn a greater earneſtneſs of *faſting* and *prayer* with it on the Faſt-days of his Ember Week.

Here is no hard impoſition. The performance is as eaſie in it ſelf, as it will be ſucceſsful in its effects. If I did not conſider, rather what the Age can bear, than what were to be wiſhed for, I would add a great many ſevere Rules calculated to the Notions of the Primitive times. But if this advice were put in practice, it is to be hoped, that it would ſet back many who come to be *ordained*, without conſidering duly, either what it is that they ask, or what it is that is to be asked of them: which

ſome

ſome do with ſo ſupine a negligence, that we plainly ſee that they have not ſo much as read the *Office*, or at leaſt that they have done it in ſo ſlight a manner, that they have formed no clear Notions upon any part of it, and leaſt of all, upon thoſe parts to which they themſelves are to make anſwers. And as ſuch a method as I have propoſed would probably ſtrike ſome with a due awe of Divine matters, ſo as to keep them at a diſtance, till they were in ſome ſort prepared for them; ſo it would oblige ſuch as came to it, to bring along with them a ſerious temper of mind, and ſuch a preparation of ſoul as might make that their *Orders* ſhould be a bleſſing to them, as well as they themſelves ſhould be a bleſſing to the *Church*. It muſt be the greateſt joy of a *Biſhops* life, who truly minds his *duty* in this weighty truſt of *ſending out Labourers into Gods Vineyard*; to Ordain ſuch perſons of whom he has juſt grounds to hope, that they ſhall do their *duty*, faithfully, in reaping that *Harveſt*. He reckons theſe as his Children indeed, who are to be his *ſtrength* and *ſupport*, his *fellow Labourers* and *Helpers*, his

Crown and his *Glory*. But on the other hand, how heavy a part of his *Office* must it be to *Ordain* those against whom, perhaps there lies no just objection, so that according to the Constitution and Rules of the Church, he cannot deny them; and yet he sees nothing in them that gives him courage or cheerfulness. They do not seem to have that *love* to God, that *zeal* for Christ, that *tenderness* for souls, that *meekness* and *humility*, that *mortification* and *deadness* to the world, that becomes the Character and Profession which they undertake; so that his heart fails him, and his hands tremble when he goes to *Ordain* them.

My next advice shall be to those, who are already in *Orders*, that they will at least four times a year, on the Ordination Sundays, read over the *Offices* of the Degrees of the Church in which they are: and will particularly consider the Charge that was given, and the Answers that were made by them; and then ask themselves as before God, who will *Judge* them at the *Great-day*, upon their Religious performance of them, whether they have been true to them or

not

not that ſo they may humble themſelves for their Errours, and Omiſſions, and may renew their *Vows* for the future, and ſo to be going on from Quarter to Quarter, through the whole courſe of their *Miniſtry* obſerving ſtill what ground they gain, and what progreſs they make, to ſuch as have a right Senſe of their Duty, this will be no hard performance. It will give a vaſt joy to thoſe that can go through it with ſome meaſure of aſſurance, and find, that tho in the mideſt of *many tentations* and of much weakneſs, they are ſincerely and ſeriouſly going on in their work to the beſt of their skill, and to the utmoſt of their power: So that their Conſciences ſay within them, and that without the partialities of ſelf love and flattery, *Well done, good and faithful ſervant.* The hearing of this ſaid within, upon true grounds, being the certaineſt Evidence poſſible that it ſhall be publickly ſaid at the Laſt and Great-day. This exerciſe will alſo offer checks to a man that looks for them; and intends both to underſtand his errours, and to cleanſe himſelf from them. It will upon the whole matter, make *Clergy Men* go on

with their Profession, as the Business and Labour of their Lives.

Having known the very good effect that this Method has had on some, I dare the more confidently recommend it to all others.

Before I conclude this Chapter, I will shew what Rules our Reformers had prepared with Relation to *Non-Residence*, and *Pluralities*; which tho they never passed into Laws, and so have no binding force with them, yet in these we see what was the sense of those that prepared our *Offices*, and that were the chief Instruments in that blessed Work of our *Reformation*. The 12*th*. Chapter of the Title, *concerning those that were to be admitted to Ecclesiastical Benefices*, runs thus. *Whereas, when many Benefices are conferred on one Person, every one of these must be served with less order and exactness, and many learned Men, who are not provided, are by that means shut out; therefore, such as examine the Persons who are proposed for Benefices, are to ask every one of them, whether he has at that time another Benefice or not, and if he confesses that he has, then they shall not consent to his obtaining that to which he is*

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presented, or the first Benefice shall be made void, as in case of Death, so that the Patron may present any other Person to it. Chap 13. is against *Dispensations*, in these Words. *No Man shall hereafter be capable of any Privilege, by virtue of which he may hold more Parishes than one. But such as have already obtained any such Dispensations for Pluralities, shall not be deprived of the effects of them, by virtue of this Law.* The 14*th. Chapter* relates to *Residence*, in these Words. *If any Man by reason of Age or Sickness, is disabled from discharging his Duty, or if he has any just cause of absence for some time, that shall be approved of by the Bishop, he must take care to place a worthy Person, to serve during his absence. But the Bishops ought to take a special Care, that upon no regard whatsoever, any Person may, upon feigned or pretended Reasons, be suffered to be longer absent from his Parish, than a real necessity shall require.*

These are some of the Rules which were then prepared, and happy had it been for our *Church*, if that whole work of the *Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Law*, had been then setled among us. Then we might justly have said, that

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our *Reformation* was *compleat*, and not have lamented as our *Church* still does in the *Office of Commination that the godly Discipline which was in the Primitive Church is not yet restored*, how much, and how long soever it has been *wished* for. It is more than probable that we should neither have had *Schisms*, nor *Civil Wars*, if that great design had not been abortive. If but the 19*th*. and 20*th*. Titles of that work, which treat of the *publick offices, and Officers in the Church*, had became a part of our Law, and been duly executed, we should indeed have had matter of glorying in the World.

In the Canons of the Year 1571. tho there was not then strength enough in the Church, to cure so inveterate a Disease, as *Non-Residence*, yet she expressed her detestation of it, in these Words. *The absence of a Pastor from the Lord's Flock; and that supine negligence and abandoning of the Ministry, which we observe in many, is a thing vile in it self, odious to the People, and pernicious to the Church of God; therefore, we exhort all the Pastors of Churches, in our Lord Jesus, that they will as soon as is possible, come to their Churches,*

Churches, and diligently Preach the Gospel, and according to the value of their Livings, that they will keep House, and hospitably relieve the Poor. It is true, all this is much lessened by the last Words of that Article, *That every Year they must reside at least Threescore daies upon their Benefices.* By the *Canons* made at that time, Pluralities were also limited to 20 *miles distance.* But this was enlarged to 30 miles, by the Canons in the Year 1597. Yet by these the *Pluralist* was required to spend *a good part of the Year* in both his Benefices. And upon this, has the matter rested ever since; but there is no express definition made how far that general word of *a good part of the Year* is to be understood.

I will not to this add a long invidious *History* of all the attempts that have been made for the *Reforming* these abuses, nor the methods that have been made use of to defeat them. They have been but too successful, so that we still groan under our abuses; and do not know when the time shall come in which we shall be freed from them. The defenders of those abuses, who get too much by them, to be willing to part with them,

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have made great use of this, that it was the *Puritan Party*, that during *Q. Elizabeth*, and K. *James* the 1*sts.* Reign, promoted these *Bills*, to render the Church *odious*: Whereas, it seems more probable, that those who set them forward, what invidious Characters soever their Enemies might put them under, were really *the Friends of the Church*; and that they intended to preserve it, by freeing it from so crying, and so visible an abuse: which gives an offence and scandal, that is not found out by much learning, or great observation; but arises so evidently out of the nature of things, that a small measure of *common sense*, helps every one to see it, and to be deeply prejudic'd against it. But since our Church has fallen under the evils and mischiefs of *Schism*, none of those who divide from us, have made any more attempts this way; but seem rather to be not ill pleased, that such *Scandals* should be still among us, as hoping that this is so great a load upon our Church, that it both weakens our strength, and lessens our Authority. It is certainly the interest of an Enemy to suffer the body to which he opposes himself to lie under as many Prejudices, and

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to be liable to as much censure, as is possible; whereas every good and wise Friend studies to preserve that body to which he unites himself, by freeing it from every thing that may render it less acceptable, and less useful.

Here I will leave this Argument, having I think said enough, to convince all, that have a true Zeal to our Church, and that think themselves bound in conscience to obey its Rules, and that seem to have a particular jealousie of the *Civil Powers*, breaking in too far upon the *Ecclesiastical Authority*, that there can be nothing more plain and express, than that our *Church* intends to bring all her *Priests* under the strictest obligations possible, to constant and personal *Labour*, and that in this she pursues the designs and Canons, not only of the *Primitive*, and *best* times, but even of the *worst Ages*, Since none were ever so corrupt as not to condemn those abuses by *Canon*, even when they maintained them in *practice*. She does not only bind *them* to this, by the *Charge* she appoints to be given, but also by the *Vows* and *Promises* that she demands of such as are *Ordained*. When all this is laid together, and when there

stands

ſtands nothing on the other ſide, to balance it, but a Law made in a very bad time, that took away ſome *abuſes*, but left pretences to cover others; Can any man that weighs theſe things together, in the *ſight of God*, and that believes he muſt anſwer to him for this at the *great Day*, think, that the one, how ſtrong ſoever it may be in his favour at an earthly Tribunal, will be of any force in that *laſt and dreadful Judgment*. This I leave upon all Mens Conſciences; hoping that *they will ſo judge themſelves, that they ſhall not be judged of the Lord.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the due preparation of such as may and ought to be put in Orders.

THE greatest good that one can hope to do in this World is upon young Persons, who have not yet taken their ply, and are not spoiled with Prejudices, and wrong Notions. Those who have taken an ill *one* at first, will neither be at the pains to look over their Notions, nor turn to new Methods; nor will they by any change of Practice, seem to confess that they were once in the wrong; so that if Matters that are amiss, can be mended or set right, it must be by giving those that have not yet set out, and that are not yet engaged, truer views, and juster Idea's of things. I will therefore here lay down the model, upon which a *Clerk* is to be formed, and will begin with such things as ought to be previous and preparatory to his being initiated into Orders. These

These are of two sorts, the one is of such preparations as are necessary to give his Heart and Soul a *right temper*, and a *true sense* of things: The other is of such *studies* as are necessary to enable him to go through with the several parts of his Duty. Both are necessary, but the first is the more indispensible of the two; for a Man of a good Soul, may with a moderate proportion of knowledge do great Service in the Church, especially if he is suited with an imployment, that is not above his *Talent*: Whereas unsanctified knowledge puffs up; is insolent and unquiet, it gives great scandal, and occasions much distraction in the Church. In treating of these qualifications, I will watch over my thoughts, not to let them rise to a pitch that is above what the common frailties of humane Nature, or the Age we live in, can bear: and after all, if in any thing I may seem to exceed these measures, it is to be considered, that it is natural in proposing the *Ideas* of things, to carry them to what is *wished* for, which is but too often beyond what can be *expected*; considering *both* the corruption of mankind and of these degenerated times. *First,*

Firſt of all then, he that intends to dedicate himſelf to the Church, ought, from the time that he takes up any ſuch Reſolution, to enter upon a greater Decency of Behaviour, that his Mind may not be vitiated by ill Habits; which may both give ſuch bad Characters of him, as may ſtick long on him afterwards, and make ſuch ill Impreſſions on himſelf, as may not be eaſily worn out or defaced. He ought, above all things, to poſſeſs himſelf with a high Senſe of the *Chriſtian Religion*, of its Truth and Excellence, of the Value of Souls, of the Dignity of the *Paſtoral Care*, of the Honour of *God*, of the Sacredneſs of *Holy Functions*, and of the Great *Truſt* that is committed to thoſe who are ſet apart from the World, and dedicated to God and to his Church. He who looks this way, muſt break himſelf to the Appetites of Pleaſure, or Wealth, of Ambition, or Authority; he muſt conſider that the *Religion*, in which he intends to Officiate, calls all Men to great Purity and Vertue; to a Probity and Innocence of Manners, to a Meekneſs and Gentleneſs, to a Humility and Self-denial, to a Contempt of the World and a Heavenly Mindedneſs, to a Patient Reſignation to the Will of

God, and a readineſs to bear the Croſs, in the hopes of that everlaſting Reward, which is reſerved for Chriſtians in another State: All which was eminently recommended, by the unblemiſh'd Pattern that the Author of this *Religion*, has ſet to all that pretend to be his Followers. Theſe being the Obligations which a Preacher of the Goſpel is to lay daily upon all his Hearers, he ought certainly to accuſtom himſelf often to conſider ſeriouſly of them; and to think how Shameleſs and Impudent a thing it will be in him, to perform *Offices* ſuitable to all theſe, and that do ſuppoſe them, to be Inſtructing the People, and Exhorting them to the Practice of them, unleſs he is in *ſome ſort* all this himſelf, which he teaches others to be.

Indeed to be tied to ſuch an Employment, while one has not an inward Conformity to it, and Complacence in it, is both the moſt unbecoming, the moſt unpleaſant, and the moſt uncomfortable State of Life imaginable. Such a Perſon will be expoſed to all Mens Cenſures and Reproaches, who when they ſee things amiſs in his Conduct, do not only Reproach him, but the whole Church and Body, to which he belongs; and which is more, the Religion which he

ſeems

ſeems to recommend by his Diſcourſes, though his Life and Actions, which will always paſs for the moſt real Declaration of his inward Sentiments, are a viſible and continual oppoſition to it. On all theſe things, he whoſe Thoughts carry him towards the Church, ought to reflect frequently: Nothing is ſo odious as a Man that diſagrees with his Character, a Soldier that is a *Coward*, a Courtier that is *Brutal*; an Ambaſſadour that is *Abject*, are not ſuch unſeemly things, as a bad or vicious, a drunken or diſſolute *Clergy-man*. But though his Scandals ſhould not riſe up to ſo high a pitch, even a Proud and Paſſionate, a Worldly Minded and Covetous *Prieſt*, gives the Lye to his Diſcourſes ſo palpably, that he cannot expect they ſhould have much weight. Nor is ſuch a Man's State of Life leſs unpleaſant to himſelf, than it is unbecoming. He is obliged to be often performing *Offices*, and pronouncing *Diſcourſes*, in which if he is not a Good Man, he not only has no Pleaſure, but muſt have a formed Averſion to them. They muſt be the heavieſt Burden of his Life; he muſt often feel ſecret Challenges within; and though he as often ſilences theſe, yet ſuch unwel-

but carries a Shoal down with him, either of those who have perished in Ignorance, through his neglect; or of those who have been hardned in their Sins, through his ill Example: And since all this must be put to his Account, it may be justly inferred from hence, That no man can have a heavier share in the miseries of another State, than profane and wicked *Clerks*. On all these things he ought to imploy his thoughts frequently, who intends to dedicate himself to God, that so he may firmly resolve not to go on with it, till he feels such Seeds and Beginnings of good things in himself, that he has reason to hope, that through the Grace and Assistance of God, he will be an Example to others.

He ought more particularly to examine himself, whether he has that Soft and Gentle, that Meek and Humble, and that Charitable and Compassionate Temper, which the Gospel does so much press upon all Christians; that shined so eminently through the whole Life of the Blessed Author of it; and which he has so singularly recommended to all his Followers; and that has in it so many Charms and Attractives, which do not only commend those who have these amiable Vertues,

tues, but which is much more to be regarded, they give them vaſt advantages in recommending the Doctrine of our Saviour to their People. They are the true ground of that Chriſtian Wiſdom and Diſcretion, and of that grave and calm Deportment, by which the Clergy ought to carry on and maintain their Authority. A haughty and huffing Humour, an Impatient and inſolent Temper, a loftineſs of Deportment, and a peeviſhneſs of Spirit, rendring the Lives of the *Clergy*, for the moſt part, bitter to themſelves, and their Labours, how valuable ſoever otherwiſe they may be, unacceptable and uſeleſs to their People. A Clergyman muſt be prepared to bear Injuries, to endure much unjuſt Cenſure and Calumny, to ſee himſelf often neglected, and others preferred to him, in the eſteem of the People. He that takes all this ill, that reſents it, and complains of it, does thereby give himſelf much diſquiet, and to be ſure, he will, through his Peeviſhneſs, rather encreaſe than leſſen that Contempt, under which he is ſo uneaſie; which is both better born, and ſooner overcome, by a meek and a lowly Temper. A Man of this Diſpoſition affects

no Singularities, unleſs the faultineſs of thoſe about him, makes his doing his Duty to be a *Singularity*: He does not ſtudy to leſſen the value that is due to others, on deſign to encreaſe his own: His low thoughts of himſelf, make that he is neither aſpiring, nor envying ſuch as are advanced: He is prepared to ſtay till God in his Providence thinks fit to raiſe him: He ſtudies only to deſerve Preferment, and leaves to others the *wringing* Poſts of Advantage out of the Hands of thoſe that give them. Such a Preparation of Mind in a Clergy-man, diſpoſes him to be Happy in whatſoever Station he may be put, and renders the Church happy in him; for Men ſo moulded, even though their Talents ſhould be but mean, are ſhining Lights, that may perhaps be at firſt deſpiſed, as Men of a low ſize, that have not Greatneſs of Soul enough to aſpire, but when they have been ſeen and known ſo long, that all appears to be ſincere, and that the Principle from whence this flows, is rightly conſidered, then every thing that they ſay or do, muſt have its due weight: The plaineſt and ſimpleſt things that they ſay have a Beauty in them, and will be hearkned to as Oracles.

But

But a Man that intends to prepare himſelf right for the Miniſtry of the Church, muſt indeed above all things, endeavour to break himſelf to the love of the World, either of the Wealth, the Pomp, or the Pleaſures of it. He muſt learn to be content with plain and ſimple Diet; and often even abridge that, by true *Faſting:* I do not call *Faſting*, a trifling diſtinction of Meats, but a leſſening of the quantity, as well as the quality, and a contracting the time ſpent at Meals, that ſo he may have a greater Freedom both in his Time, and in his Thoughts; that he may be more alone, and pray and meditate more, and that what he ſaves out of his Meals, he may give to the Poor. This is, in ſhort, the true Meaſure and right Uſe of *Faſting*. In cold Climates, an abſtinence till Night, may create Diſorders, and raiſe ſuch a Diſturbance both in the Appetite, and in the Digeſtion; that this managed upon the practices of other Countries, eſpecially in young Perſons, may really diſtract inſtead of furthering thoſe who do it Indiſcreetly. In ſhort *Faſting* unleſs joyned with Prayer and Alms-giving, is of no Value in the ſight of God. It is a vaſt Advantage to a Man to be broken

broken to the Niceties of his Palate, to be content with plain Food, and even to diſlike Delicacies and ſtudied Diſhes. This will make him eaſie in narrower Circumſtances; ſince a plain Bill of Fare is ſoon diſcharged. A lover of his Appetites, and a ſlave to his Taſte, makes but a mean Figure among Men, and a very ſcurvy one among Clergy-men.

This deadneſs to the World muſt raiſe one above the Affectations of Pomp and State, of Attendance and high Living. Which to a Philoſophical Mind will be heavy, when the Circumſtances he is in, ſeem to impoſe and force it on him. And therefore he who has a right Senſe, finds it is almoſt all he can do, to bear thoſe things which the Tyranny of Cuſtom or falſe Opinions put upon him: So far is he from longing for them. A Man that is truly dead to the World, would chuſe much rather to live in a lowly and narrow Figure; than to be obliged to enter into the Methods of the greatneſs of this World; into which, if the Conſtitutions and Forms of a Church and Kingdom put him, yet he feels himſelf in an unnatural and uncouth Poſture: It is contrary to his own Genius and Reliſh of things; and therefore he does not court

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nor deſire ſuch a ſituation, but even while he is in it, he ſhews ſuch a Neglect of the State of it, and ſo much Indifference and Humility in it, that it appears how little power thoſe things have over his Mind, and how little they are able to ſubdue and corrupt it. This mortified Man muſt likewiſe become dead to all the Deſigns and Projects of making a Family, or of raiſing the Fortunes of thoſe that are nearly related to him: He muſt be Bountiful and Charitable; and tho' it is not only lawful to him, but a neceſſary Duty incumbent on him, to make due proviſion for his Family, if he has any, yet this muſt be ſo moderated that no vain nor ſordid Deſigns, no indirect nor unbecoming Arts, may mix in it; no exceſſive Wealth nor great Projects muſt appear; he muſt be contented with ſuch a proportion, as may ſet his Children in the way of a vertuous and liberal Education; ſuch as may ſecure them from Scandal and Neceſſity, and put them in a Capacity to ſerve God and their Generation in ſome honeſt Employment. But he who brings along with him, a Voluptuous, an Ambitious, or a Covetous Mind, that is Carnal and Earthly minded, comes as a *Hireling* to

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feed himſelf and not the Flock, he comes to Steal and to Deſtroy. Upon all, this great Reflection is to be made concerning the Motives that determine one to offer himſelf to this Employment.

In the firſt beginnings of Chriſtianity, no Man could reaſonably think of taking *Orders*, unleſs he had in him the *Spirit of Martyrdom.* He was to look for nothing in this Service, but Labour and Perſecution: He was indeed to *live of the Altar*, and that was all the Portion that he was to expect in this World. In thoſe Days an extraordinary Meaſure of Zeal and Devotion was neceſſary, to engage Men to ſo hard and difficult a Province, that how great ſoever its Reward might be in another World, had nothing to look for in this, but a narrow Proviſion, and the firſt and largeſt ſhare of the Croſs: They were the beſt known, the moſt expoſed, and the ſooneſt fallen upon in the Perſecution. But their Services and their Sufferings did ſo much recommend that Function in the ſucceeding Ages, that the Faithful thought they could never do enough to expreſs their Value for it. The Church came to be Richly endowed; and tho' Superſtition had raiſed this out of meaſure, yet the

the Extreme went as far to the other hand at the Reformation, when the *Church* was almost stript of all its Patrimony, and a great many Churches were left so poor, that there was not in most Places, a sufficient; nay, not so much as a necessary Maintenance, reserved for those that were to minister in Holy Things. But it is to be acknowledged that there are such Remnants preserved, that many *Benefices* of the Church still may, and perhaps do but too much, work upon Mens corrupt Principles, their Ambition, and their Covetousness: And it is shrewdly to be apprehended, that of those who present themselves at the *Altar*, a great part comes, as those who followed Christ, for the *Loaves:* Because of the good Prospect they have of making their Fortunes by the Church.

If this Point should be carried too far, it might perhaps seem to be a pitch above Humane Nature; and certainly very far above the degeneracy of the Age we live in: I shall therefore lay this matter, with as large an allowance, as I think it can bear. It is certain, that since God has made us to be a *Compound of Soul and Body*, it is not only *lawful* but *suitable* to the order of Nature, for us in the Choice

Choice we make of the *ſtate of Life* that we intend to purſue, to conſider our *Bodies*, in the next place after our *Souls*: Yet we ought certainly to begin with our *Souls*, with the Powers and Faculties that are in them, and conſider well of what Temper they are; and what our Meaſure and Capacity is; that ſo we may chuſe ſuch a courſe of Life, for which we ſeem to be fitted, and in which we may probably do the moſt good both to our ſelves and others: From hence we ought to take our Aims and Meaſures chiefly: But in the next place, we not only may, but ought to conſider our *Bodies*, how they ſhall be maintained, in a way ſuitable to that *ſtate of Life*, into which we are engaged. Therefore tho' no Man can with a good Conſcience, begin upon a worldly Account, and reſolve to dedicate himſelf to the Church, merely out of Carnal regard; ſuch as an Advowſon in his Family, a Friend that will Promote him, or any other ſuch like Proſpect, till he has firſt conſulted his Temper and Diſpoſition, his Talents and his Capacities; yet, tho' it is not Lawful to make the Regards of this World his firſt Conſideration, and it cannot be denied to be a perfecter ſtate, if a Man ſhould offer himſelf to the

the Church, having whereon to ſupport himſelf, without any Aſſiſtance or Reward out of its Patrimony; and to be nearer to S. *Paul*'s practice, *whoſe hands miniſtred to his neceſſities*, and who reckoned that in this he had *whereof to glory, that he was not burthenſome to the Churches:* Yet it is, without doubt, *Lawful* for a Man to Deſign that he may ſubſiſt in and out of the Service of the Church: But then theſe Deſigns muſt be limited to a *Subſiſtence*, to ſuch a moderate Proportion, as may maintain one in that ſtate of Life. And muſt not be let fly by a reſtleſs Ambition, and an inſatiable Covetouſneſs, as a ravenous Bird of prey, does at all Game. There muſt not be a perpetual Enquiry into the Value of Benefices; and a conſtant Importuning of ſuch as give them: If *Laws* have been made in ſome *States* reſtraining all *Ambitus* and aſpirings to Civil Imployments, certainly it were much more reaſonable to put a ſtop to the ſcandalous Importunities, that are every where complained of; and no where more viſible and more offenſive than at *Court*. This gives a Prejudice to Men that are otherwiſe enclined enough to ſearch for one, that can never be removed,

ved, but by putting an effectual bar in the way of that ſcrambling for Benefices and Preferments; which will ever make the *Lay* part of Mankind conclude, that let us pretend what we will, *Covetouſneſs* and *Ambition* are our true Motives, and our chief *Vocation.* It is true, the ſtrange Practices of many *Patrons*, and the Conſtitution of moſt *Courts*, give a colour to excuſe ſo great an Indecency. Men are generally ſucceſsful in thoſe Practices, and as long as Humane Nature is ſo ſtrong, as all Men feel it to be, it will be hard to divert them from a Method which is ſo common, that to act otherwiſe would look like an affectation of Singularity; and many apprehend, that they muſt languiſh in Miſery and Neceſſity if they are wanting to themſelves, in ſo general a Practice. And, indeed, if *Patrons*, but chiefly if *Princes* would effectually cure this Diſeaſe which gives them ſo much Trouble, as well as Offence, they muſt reſolve to diſtribute thoſe Benefices that are in their *Gift*, with ſo viſible a Regard to true Goodneſs and real Merit, and with ſo firm and ſo conſtant an Oppoſition to *Application* and *Importunity*, that it may appear that the only way to Advancement, is to live well, to ſtudy hard,

hard, to ſtay at home, and labour diligently; and that *Applications* by the *Perſons* themſelves, or any ſet on by them, ſhall always put thoſe back who make them: This would more effectually cure ſo great an Evil, than all that can be ſaid againſt it. One *ſucceſsful ſuiter* who carries his *Point*, will promote this *Diſorder*, more than Twenty Repulſes of others; for unleſs the *Rule* is ſeverely carried on, every one will run into it; and hope to proſper as well as he, who they ſee has got his end in it. If thoſe who have the Diſpoſition of *Benefices*, to which the *Cure of Souls is annexed*, did conſider this as a *Truſt*, lodged with them, for which they muſt anſwer to God, and that they ſhall be in a great meaſure accountable for the *Souls*, that may be loſt through the bad choice that they make, knowing it to be bad; if, I ſay, they had this more in their Thoughts, than ſo many Scores of Pounds, as the Living amounts to; and thought themſelves really bound, as without doubt they are, to ſeek out Good and Worthy Men, well qualified and duely prepared, according to the Nature of that Benefice which they are to give; then we might hope to

ſee men make it their chief Study, to qualifie themſelves aright; to order their Lives, and frame their Minds, as they ought to do, and to carry on their Studies with all Application and Diligence; but as long as the *ſhort Methods*, of Application, Friendſhip, or Intereſt, are more effectual than the *long and hard way*, of Labour and Study; Human Nature will always carry men to go the ſureſt, the eaſieſt, and the quickeſt way to work.

After all I wiſh it were well conſidered, by all *Clerks*, what it is to run without being either *called* or *ſent*; and ſo to thruſt ones ſelf into the *Vineyard*, without ſtaying, till God by his Providence puts a piece of his work in his Hands; this will give a man a vaſt eaſe in his Thoughts, and a great ſatisfaction in all his Labours, if he knows that no Practices of his own, but merely the Directions of Providence, have put him in a Poſt. He may well truſt the Effects of a thing to God, when the Cauſes of it do plainly flow from him. And though this will appear to a great many a hard Saying, ſo that few will be able to bear it, yet I muſt add this to the encouragement and comfort of ſuch

ſuch as can reſolve to deliver themſelves up to the Conduct and Directions of *Providence*, that I never yet knew any one of thoſe few (too few I confeſs they have been) who were poſſeſſed with this *Maxim*, and that have followed it exactly, that have not found the Fruit of it even in this World. A watchful Care hath hovered over them: Inſtruments have been raiſed up, and Accidents have happened to them ſo proſperouſly, as if there had been a *ſecret Deſign* of Heaven by bleſſing them ſo *ſignally*, to encourage others to follow their *Meaſures*, to depend on God, to deliver themſelves up to his Care, and to wait till he opens a way for their being Imployed, and ſettled in ſuch a Portion of his Husbandry, as he ſhall think fit to aſſign to them.

Theſe are Preparations of Mind, with which a *Clerk* is to be formed and ſeaſoned: And in order to this, he muſt read the Scriptures much, he muſt get a great deal of thoſe Paſſages in them, that relate to theſe things, by heart, and repeat them often to himſelf; in particular many of the moſt tender and melting *Pſalms*, and many of the moſt comprehenſive Paſſages in the Epiſtles; that

by the frequent reflecting on theſe, he may fill his Memory with Noble Notions, and right Idea's of things: The Book of *Proverbs*, but chiefly *Eccleſiaſtes*, if he can get to underſtand it, will beget in him a right view of the World, a juſt value of Things, and a contempt of many Objects that ſhine with a falſe Luſtre, but have no true Worth in them. Some of the Books taught at *Schools*, if read afterwards, when one is more capable to obſerve the Senſe of them, may be of great uſe to promote this Temper. *Tully*'s *Offices* will give the Mind a noble ſett; all his Philoſophical Diſcourſes, but chiefly his *Conſolation*; which though ſome Criticks will not allow to be his, becauſe they fanſie the Stile has not all the force and beauty in it that was peculiar to him, yet is certainly the beſt Piece of them all; theſe, I ſay, give a good *ſavour* to thoſe who read them much. The Satyrical Poets, *Horace*, *Juvenal* and *Perſius* may contribute wonderfully to give a man a Deteſtation of Vice, and a Contempt of the common Methods of mankind; which they have ſet out in ſuch true Colours, that they muſt give a very generous Senſe to thoſe who delight in reading them often. *Perſius* his

his Second *Satyr*, may well paſs for one of the beſt Lectures in Divinity. *Hieracles* upon *Pythagoras*'s *Verſes*, *Plutarch*'s Lives; and above all, the Books of Heatheniſm, *Epictetus* and *Marcus Aurelius*, contain ſuch Inſtructions, that one cannot read them too often, nor repaſs them too frequently in his thoughts. But when I ſpeak of reading theſe Books, I do not mean only to run through them, as one does through a Book of Hiſtory, or of Notions; they muſt be read and weighed with great Care, till one is become a *Maſter* of all the Thoughts that are in them: They are to be often turned in ones Mind, till he is thereby wrought up to ſome Degrees of that Temper, which they propoſe: And as for Chriſtian Books, in order to the framing of ones Mind aright, I ſhall only Recommend *The whole Duty of Man*, *Dr.* Sherlock *of Death and Judgment*, and Dr. *Scot*'s Books, in particular that great diſtinction that runs through them, of the *means* and of the *ends* of *Religion*. To all which I ſhall add one ſmall Book more, which is to me ever *new and freſh*, gives always good Thoughts and a Noble Temper, *Thomas a Kempis of the Imitation of Chriſt*. By the frequent read-

ing of theſe Books, by the reliſh that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the Effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive, whether his Soul is made for Divine Matters or not, what ſuitableneſs there is between him and them; and whether he is yet touched with ſuch a Senſe of Religion, as to be capable of dedicating himſelf to it.

I am far from thinking that no man is fit to be a *Prieſt*, that has not the Temper which I have been deſcribing, quite up to that heigth in which I have ſet it forth; but this I will poſitively ſay, That he who has not the Seeds of it planted in him, who has not theſe Principles, and Reſolutions formed to purſue them, and to improve and perfect himſelf in them, is in no wiſe worthy of that Holy Character. If theſe things are begun in him, if they are yet but as a Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, yet if there is a Life in them, and a Vital Senſe of the Tendencies and Effects they muſt have; ſuch a Perſon, ſo moulded, with thoſe Notions and Impreſſions, and ſuch only are qualified, ſo as to be able to ſay with Truth and Aſſurance, that they *truſt they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt to undertake that Office.*

So

So far have I diſpatch'd the firſt and chief Part of the Preparation neceſſary before *Orders*. The other Branch of it, relates to their Learning, and to the Knowledge that is neceſſary. I confeſs I look upon this as ſo much Inferiour to the other, and have been convinced by ſo much Experience, that a great Meaſure of Piety, with a very ſmall Proportion of Learning, will carry one a great way, that I may perhaps be thought to come as far ſhort in this, as I might ſeem to exceed in the other. I will not here enter into a Diſcourſe of *Theological Learning*, of the meaſure that is neceſſary to make a *Compleat Divine*, and of the methods to attain it. I intend only to lay down here, that which I look on as the loweſt Degree, and as that which ſeems indiſpenſably neceſſary, to one that is to be a *Prieſt*. He muſt then underſtand the *New Teſtament* well. This is the *Text* of our *Religion*, that which we Preach and explain to others; therefore a man ought to read this ſo often over, that he may have an Idea of the whole Book in his Head, and of all the Parts of it. He cannot have this ſo ſure, unleſs he underſtands the *Greek* ſo well, as to be able to find out the meaning of every Period in it, at leaſt of the

Words and Phraſes of it; any Book of *Annotations* or *Paraphraſe* upon it, is a great help to a beginner, *Grotius*, *Hammond*, and *Lightfoot* are the beſt. But the having a great deal of the Practical and Eaſie Parts of it, ſuch as relate to Mens Lives and their Duties, ſuch as ſtrike and awaken, direct, comfort, or terrifie, are much more neceſſary than the more abſtruſe Parts. In ſhort, the being able to ſtate right the Grounds of our *Hope*, and the Terms of *Salvation*, and the having a clear and ready view of the *New Covenant in Chriſt Jeſus*, is of ſuch abſolute neceſſity, that it is a profaning of *Orders*, and a defiling of the *Sanctuary*, to bring any into it, that do not rightly underſtand this Matter in its whole extent. Biſhop *Pearſon* on the *Creed* is a Book of great Learning, and profound exactneſs. Dr. *Barrow* has opened it with more ſimplicity; and Dr. *Towerſon* more practically; one or other of theſe muſt be well read and conſidered: But when I ſay *read*, I mean *read* and *read* over again, ſo oft that one is *Maſter* of one of theſe Books; he muſt write Notes out of them, and make Abridgements of them; and turn them ſo oft in his Thoughts, that he muſt thoroughly underſtand, and well remember them. He muſt

read

read alſo the *Pſalms* over ſo carefully, that he may at leaſt have a general Notion of thoſe Divine Hymns; to which Biſhop *Patricks* Paraphraſe will help to carry him.

A Syſtem of Divinity muſt be read with exactneſs. They are almoſt all alike: When I was young *Wendelin* and *Mareſius* were the two ſhorteſt and fulleſt. Here is a vaſt Errour in the firſt forming of our *Clergy*, that a Contempt has been caſt on that ſort of *Books*; and indeed to riſe no higher, than to a perpetual reading over different *Syſtems* is but a mean pitch of Learning; and the ſwallowing down whole *Syſtems* by the Lump, has help'd to poſſeſs Peoples Minds too early with Prejudices, and to ſhut them up in too implicite a following of others. But the throwing off all theſe *Books*, makes that many who have read a great deal, yet have no intire *Body of Divinity* in their Head; they have no Scheme or Method, and ſo are Ignorant of ſome very plain things, which could never have happened to them, if they had carefully read and digeſted a *Syſtem* into their Memories. But becauſe this is indeed a very low Form; therefore to lead a man farther, to have a freer view of Divinity, to examine things

equally

equally and clearly, and to uſe his own Reaſon, by balancing the various Views, that two great Diviſions of *Proteſtants* have, not only in the Points which they controvert, but in a great many others, in which though they agree in the ſame *Concluſions*, yet they arrive at them by very different *Premiſes*; I would adviſe him that ſtudies Divinity, to read two larger Bodies, writ by ſome Eminent Men of both ſides; and becauſe the lateſt are commonly the beſt; *Turretin* for the whole *Calviniſt Hypotheſis*, and *Limburgh* for the *Arminian*, will make a Man fully the *Maſter* of all the Notions of both ſides. Or if one would ſee how far middle ways may be taken; The *Theſes* of *Saumur*, or *le Blanc*'s *Theſes*, will compleat him in that. Theſe Books well read, digeſted into Abſtracts, and frequently reviewed or talked over by two *Companions in Study*, will give a Man an entire view of the whole Body of Divinity.

But by reaſon of that peſt of Atheiſm, that Spreads ſo much among us, the Foundations of Religion muſt be well laid: Biſhop *Wilkins* Book of *Natural Religion*, will lead one in the firſt Steps through the Principles that he has laid together in a plain and natural Method.

Grotius

Grotius his Book of the *truth of the Chriſtian Religion*, with his *Notes* upon it, ought to be read and almoſt got by heart. The whole Controverſie both of *Atheiſm* and *Deiſm*, the Arguments both for the *Old and New Teſtament*, are fully opened, with a great variety both of Learning and Reaſoning, in Biſhop *Stillingfleet*'s *Origines Sacræ*.

There remains only to direct a Student how to form right Notions of Practical Matters; and particularly of Preaching. Dr. *Hammond*'s *Practical Catechiſm*, is a Book of great uſe; but not to be begun with, as too many do: It does require a good deal of previous Study, before the force of his Reaſonings is apprehended; but when one is ready for it, it is a rare Book, and States the Grounds of Morality, and of our Duty, upon true Principles. To form one to underſtand the right Method of Preaching, the Extent of it, and the proper ways of Application, Biſhop *Sanderſon*, Mr. *Faringdon*, and Dr. *Barrow*, are the beſt and the fulleſt Models. There is a vaſt variety of other Sermons, which may be read with an equal meaſure of Advantage and

Pleaſure.

Pleaſure. And if from the time that one reſolves to direct his Studies towards the Church, he would every Lords day read two Sermons of any good Preacher, and turn them a little over in his Thoughts, this would inſenſibly in two or three years time, carry him very far, and give him a large view of the different ways of Preaching, and furniſh him with Materials for handling a great many *Texts of Scripture* when he comes to it.

And thus I have carried my Student through thoſe Studies, that ſeem to me ſo neceſſary for qualifying him to be an able *Miniſter of the New Teſtament*, that I cannot ſee how any Article of this can be well abated. It may ſeem ſtrange, that in this whole Direction, I have ſaid nothing concerning the Study of the *Fathers* or *Church Hiſtory*. But I ſaid at firſt, that a great diſtinction was to be made between what was neceſſary to prepare a Man to be a *Prieſt*, and what was neceſſary to make him a Compleat and Learned *Divine*.

The knowledge of theſe things is neceſſary to the latter, though they do not ſeem ſo neceſſary for the former:

There

There are many things to be left to the Proſecution of a Divine's Study, that therefore are not mentioned here, not with any deſign to diſparage that ſort of Learning; for I am now only upon that meaſure of Knowledge, under which I heartily wiſh that no Man were put in *Prieſts Orders*; and therefore I have paſs'd over many other things, ſuch as the more accurate Underſtanding of the *Controverſies* between us and the *Church of Rome*, and the unhappy Diſputes between us and the *Diſſenters* of all ſorts; though both the one and the other, have of late been opened with that perſpicuity, that fulneſs of Argument, and that clearneſs as well as ſoftneſs of *Stile*, that a *Collection* of theſe may give a Man the fulleſt Inſtructions, that is to be found in any Books I know. Others, and perhaps the far greater number, will think that I have clogged this Matter too much. But I deſire theſe may conſider how much we do *juſtly* reckon, that our *Profeſſion* is preferrable either to *Law* or *Medicine*. Now, if this is true, it is not unreaſonable, that ſince thoſe who pretend to theſe, muſt be at ſo much

Pains

Pains, before they enter upon a *Practice* which relates only to Men's *Fortunes*, or their *Perſons*, we whoſe Labours relate to their *Souls* and their *eternal State*, ſhould be at leaſt at ſome conſiderable Pains, before we enter upon them. Let any *young Divine* go to the Chambers of a *Student* in the *Inns of Court*, and ſee how many Books he muſt read, and how great a Volume of a *Common-Place-Book* he muſt make, he will there ſee through how hard a Task one muſt go, in a courſe of many Years, and how ready he muſt be in all the Parts of it, before he is called to the *Barr*, or can manage *Buſineſs*. How exact muſt a *Phyſician* be in Anatomy, in Simples, in Pharmacy, in the Theory of Diſeaſes, and in the Obſervations and Counſels of Doctors, before he can either with *Honour*, or a *ſafe Conſcience*, undertake *Practice*? He muſt be ready with all this, and in that infinite number of *hard Words*, that belong to every part of it, to give his Directions and write his *Bills* by the Patient's Bed-ſide; who cannot ſtay 'till he goes to his *Study* and turns over his Books. If then ſo long a courſe of Study, and ſo much exactneſs and readineſs in it, is neceſſary to theſe Profeſſions; nay, if every mechanical Art, even

the

the meaneſt, requires a courſe of many Years, before one can be a Maſter in it, ſhall the nobleſt and the moſt important of all others, that which comes from Heaven, and leads thither again; ſhall that which God has honoured ſo highly, and to which Laws and Governments have added ſuch Privileges and Encouragements, that is employ'd in the ſublimeſt Exerciſes, which require a proportioned worth in thoſe who handle them, to maintain their Value and Dignity in the Eſteem of the World; ſhall all this, I ſay, be eſteemed ſo low a thing in our Eyes, that a much leſs degree of Time and Study, is neceſſary to arrive at it, than at the moſt ſordid of all Trades whatſoever? And yet after all, a Man of a tolerable Capacity, with a good degree of Application, may go through all this well, and exactly, in two Years time. I am very ſure, by many an Experiment I have made, that this may be done in a much leſs compaſs: But becauſe all Men do not go alike quick, have not the ſame force, nor the ſame application, therefore I reckon two Years for it; which I do thus divide: One Year before *Deacons Orders*, and another between them and *Prieſts Orders*.

And

And can this be thought a hard Impoſition? Or do not thoſe, who think thus, give great occaſion to the *Contempt of the Clergy*, if they give the World cauſe to obſerve, that how much ſoever we may magnifie our Profeſſion, yet by our practice, we ſhew that we do judge it the meaneſt of all others, which is to be arrived at upon leſs previous ſtudy and preparation to it, than any other whatſoever? Since I have been hitherto ſo minute, I will yet divide this matter a little lower into thoſe parts of it, without which, *Deacons* Orders ought not to be given, and thoſe to be reſerved to the ſecond Year of ſtudy. To have read the *New Teſtament* well, ſo as to carry a great deal of it in one's Memory, to have a clear notion of the ſeveral Books of it, to underſtand well the Nature and the Conditions of the *Covenant of Grace*, and to have read one *Syſtem* well, ſo as to be *Maſter* of it, to underſtand the whole *Catechetical* matter, to have read *Wilkins* and *Grotius*; this, I ſay, is that part of this Task, which I propoſe before one is made *Deacon*. The reſt, though much the larger, will go the eaſier, if thoſe Foundations are once well laid in them. And upon the Article

of

of Studying the Scriptures, I will add one Advice more.

There are two Methods in reading them, the one ought to be merely *Critical*, to find out the meaning and coherence of the ſeveral Parts of them; in which one runs eaſily through the greater Part, and is only obliged to ſtop at ſome harder Paſſages, which may be marked down and learned Men are to be conſulted upon them: Thoſe that are really hard to be explained, are both few, and they relate to Matters that are not ſo eſſential to Chriſtianity; and therefore after one has in general ſeen what is ſaid upon theſe, he may put off the fuller Conſideration of that to more leiſure, and better opportunities. But the other way of reading the Scriptures, is to be done merely with a view to Practice, to raiſe Devotion, to encreaſe Piety, and to give good Thoughts and ſevere Rules. In this a Man is to imploy himſelf much. This is a Book always at hand, and the getting a great deal of it by *heart*, is the beſt part of a Clergyman's Study; it is the Foundation, and lays in the Materials for all the reſt. This alone may furniſh a Man with a

noble Stock of lively Thoughts, and sublime Expressions; and therefore it must be always reckoned as that, without which all other things amount to nothing; and the chief and main Subject of the Study, the Meditation and the Discourses of a Clergy-man.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Functions and Labours of Clergy-men.

I Have in the former Chapter laid down the Model and Method, by which a Clerk is to be formed and prepared; I come now to consider his Course of *Life*, his Publick *Functions*, and his Secret *Labours*. In this as well as in the former, I will study to consider what Mankind can *bear*, rather than what may be offered in a fair Idea, that is far above what we can hope ever to bring the World to. As for a Priests *Life* and Conversation, so much was said in the former Chapter; in which as a preparation to Orders, it was proposed what he ought to be, that

that I may now be the ſhorter on this Article.

The *Clergy* have one great advantage, beyond all the reſt of the World, in this reſpect, beſides all others, that whereas the particular Callings of other Men, prove to them great Diſtractions, and lay many Temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their *high and holy Calling* of being *Chriſtians*, it is quite otherwiſe with the *Clergy*, the more they follow their private *Callings*, they do the more certainly advance their general one: The better *Prieſts* they are, they become alſo the better *Chriſtians*: every part of their *Calling*, when well performed, raiſes good Thoughts, brings good Idea's into their Mind, and tends both to encreaſe their Knowledge, and quicken their Senſe of Divine Matters. A Prieſt therefore is more accountable to God, and the World for his Deportment, and will be more ſeverely accounted with than any other Perſon whatſoever. He is more watched over and obſerved than all others: *Very good men* will be, even to a Cenſure, jealous of him; *very bad men* will wait for his halting, and Inſult upon it;

and all ſorts of Perſons, will be willing to defend themſelves againſt the Authority of his Doctrine and Admonitions; by this *he ſays but does not*; and though our Saviour charged his Diſciples and Followers, *to hear thoſe who ſat in Moſes his Chair, and to obſerve and do whatſoever they bid them obſerve, but not to do after their works, for they ſaid and did not*; the World will reverſe this quite, and conſider rather how a Clerk *Lives*, than what he *Says*. They ſee the one, and from it conclude what he himſelf thinks of the other; and ſo will believe themſelves not a little juſtified, if they can ſay that they did no worſe, than as they ſaw their Miniſter do before them.

Math. 23. 2, 3.

Therefore a Prieſt muſt not only abſtain from groſs Scandals, but keep at the furtheſt diſtance from them: He muſt not only not be drunk, but he muſt not ſit a Tipling; nor go to Taverns or Ale-houſes, except ſome urgent occaſion requires it, and ſtay no longer in them, than as that occaſion demands it. He muſt not only abſtain from Acts of Lewdneſs, but from all indecent Behaviour, and unbecoming

becoming Raillery. *Gaming* and *Plays*, and every thing of that ſort, which is an approach to the Vanities and Diſorders of the World, muſt be avoided by him. And unleſs the ſtraitneſs of his Condition, or his Neceſſities force it, he ought to ſhun all other Cares, ſuch as, not only the farming of Grounds, but even the teaching of Schools, ſince theſe muſt of neceſſity take him off both from his Labour and Study. Such Diverſions as his Health, or the Temper of his Mind, may render proper for him, ought to be Manly, Decent and Grave; and ſuch as may neither poſſeſs his Mind or Time too much, nor give a bad Character of him to his People: He muſt alſo avoid too much Familiarity with bad People; and the ſquandring away his time in too much vain and idle Diſcourſe. His chearfulneſs ought to be frank, but neither exceſſive nor licentious: His *Friends* and his *Garden* ought to be his chief Diverſions, as his *Study* and his *Pariſh*, ought to be his chief Imployments. He muſt ſtill carry on his Study, making himſelf an abſolute Maſter of the few Books he has, till his Circumſtances grow

larger, that he can purchaſe more. He can have no pretence, if he were ever ſo narrow in the World, to ſay, that he cannot get, not only the *Collects*, but the *Pſalms*, and the *New Teſtament* by heart, or at leaſt a great part of them. If there are any Books belonging to his Church, ſuch as *Jewels* Works, and the *Book of Martyrs*, which lie tearing in many Places, theſe he may read over and over again, till he is able to furniſh himſelf better, I mean with a greater variety; but let him furniſh himſelf ever ſo well, the reading and underſtanding the *Scriptures*, chiefly the *Pſalms and the New Teſtament*, ought to be ſtill his chief Study, till he becomes ſo converſant in them, that he can both ſay many Parts of them, and explain them without Book.

It is the only viſible Reaſon of the *Jews* adhering ſo firmly to their Religion, that during the Ten or Twelve years of their Education, their Youth are ſo much practiſed to the Scriptures, to weigh every word in them, and get them all by heart, that it is an Admiration, to ſee how ready both Men and Women among them

them are at it; their *Rabbi's* have it to that Perfection, that they have the Concordance of their whole Bible in their Memories, which give them vaſt Advantages, when they are to argue with any that are not ſo ready as they are in the Scriptures: Our Task is much ſhorter and eaſier, and it is a *Reproach*, eſpecially to us Proteſtants, who found our Religion merely on the Scriptures, that we know the *New Teſtament* ſo little, which cannot be excuſed.

With the Study of the *Scriptures*, or rather as a part of it comes in the Study of the *Fathers*, as far as one can go; in theſe their *Apologies*, and *Epiſtles*, are chiefly to be read; for theſe give us the beſt view of thoſe Times: *Baſil's* and *Chryſoſtom's* Sermons, are by much the beſt. To theſe Studies, *Hiſtory* comes in as a noble and pleaſant Addition; that gives a Man great views of the Providence of God, of the Nature of Man, and of the Conduct of the World. This is above no Man's Capacity; and though ſome Hiſtories are better than others; yet any Hiſtories, ſuch as one can get, are to be read, rather than none

at all. If one can compaſs it, he ought to begin with the Hiſtory of the Church, and there at the Head *Joſephus*, and go on with *Euſebius*, *Socrates*, and the other Hiſtorians, that are commonly bound together; and then go to other later Collectors of Ancient Hiſtory; the Hiſtory of our own Church and Country is to come next; then the Ancient *Greek* and *Roman* Hiſtory, and after that, as much Hiſtory, Geography, and Books of Travels as can be had, will give an eaſie and a uſeful Entertainment, and will furniſh one with great variety of good Thoughts, and of pleaſant, as well as edifying Diſcourſe. As for all other Studies, every one muſt follow his Inclinations, his Capacities, and that which he can procure to himſelf. The Books that we learn at Schools are generally laid aſide, with this Prejudice, that they were the *Labours* as well as the *Sorrows* of our *Childhood* and *Education*; but they are among the beſt of Books. The *Greek* and *Roman* Authors have a Spirit in them, a force both of Thought and Expreſſion, that later Ages have not been able to imitate: *Buchanan* only excepted,

cepted, in whom, more particularly in his *Psalms*, there is a Beauty and Life, an Exactness as well as a Liberty, that cannot be imitated, and scarce enough commended. The Study and Practice of *Physick*, especially that which is safe and simple, puts the Clergy in a capacity of doing great Acts of Charity, and of rendring both their Persons and Labours very acceptable to their People; it will procure their being soon sent for by them in Sickness, and it will give them great advantages in speaking to them, of their Spiritual Concerns, when they are so careful of their Persons, but in this nothing that is *sordid* must mix.

These ought to be the chief Studies of the Clergy. But to give all these their full effect, a Priest that is much in his Study, ought to Imploy a great part of his Time in secret and fervent *Prayer*, for the Direction and Blessing of God in his Labours, for the constant assistance of his Holy Spirit, and for a lively Sense of Divine Matters, that so he may feel the Impressions of them grow deep and strong upon his Thoughts. This, and this only, will make him go on with his *work*, without

out wearying, and be always rejoycing in it: This will make his Expreſſions of theſe things to be Happy and Noble, when he can bring them out of the *good Treaſure of his Heart*; that is, ever full, and always warm with them.

From his Study, I go next to his Publick Functions: He muſt bring his Mind to an inward and feeling Senſe of thoſe things that are *prayed* for in our *Offices*: That will make him pronounce them with an equal meaſure of Gravity and Affection, and with a due Slowneſs and Emphaſis. I do not love the Theatrical way of the Church of *Rome*, in which it is a great Study, and a long Practice, to learn in every one of their *Offices*, how they ought to Compoſe their Looks, Geſture and Voice; yet a light wandring of the Eyes, and a haſty running through the *Prayers*, are things highly unbecoming; they do very much leſſen the Majeſty of our *Worſhip*, and give our Enemies advantage to call it *dead and formal*, when they ſee plainly, that he who officiates *is dead and formal* in it. A deep Senſe of the things prayed for, a true Recollection and Attention of Spirit,

Spirit, and a holy Earneſtneſs of Soul, will give a Compoſure to the Looks, and a weight to the Pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and Levity on the other. As for *Preaching*, I referr that to a Chapter apart.

A Miniſter ought to Inſtruct his People frequently, of the nature of *Baptiſm*, that they may not go about it merely as a Ceremony, as it is too viſible the greater part do; but that they may conſider it as the Dedicating their Children to God, the Offering them to Chriſt, and the holding them thereafter as his, directing their chief care about them, to the breeding them up in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord.* There muſt be Care taken to give them all a right Notion of the uſe of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, which is a good Inſtitution, to procure a *double* Security for the Education of Children; it being to be ſuppoſed, that the common Ties of Nature and Religion, bind the *Parents* ſo ſtrongly, that if they are not mindful of theſe, a Special Vow would not put a new force in them, and therefore a *Collateral Security* is alſo demanded, both to ſupply their

their Defects, if they are faulty, and to take care of the Religious Education of the Infant, in caſe the Parents ſhould happen to die before that is done; and therefore no *God-father* or *God-mother* are to be invited to that Office, but ſuch with whom one would truſt the care of the Education of his Child, nor ought any to do this Office for another, but he that is willing to charge himſelf, with the *Education of the Child* for whom he anſwers. But when Ambition or Vanity, Favour or Preſents, are the Conſiderations upon which thoſe *Sureties* in Baptiſm are choſen; great advantage is hereby given to thoſe who reject *Infant Baptiſm*, and the Ends of the Church in this Inſtitution are quite defeated; which are both the making the Security that is given for the Children ſo much the ſtronger, and the eſtabliſhing an Endearment and a Tenderneſs between Families; this being, in its own Nature, no ſmall Tye, how little ſoever it may be apprehended or underſtood.

Great care muſt be taken in the Inſtruction of the Youth: The bare ſaying the *Catechiſm* by Rote is a ſmall Matter; it is neceſſary to make them underſtand the

the weight of every Word in it: And for this end, every *Prieſt*, that minds his Duty, will find that no Part of it is ſo uſeful to his People, as *once* every *year* to go through the whole *Church Catechiſm*, Word by Word, and make his People underſtand the Importance of every Tittle in it. This will be no hard labour to himſelf; for after he has once gathered together the Places of Scripture that relate to every Article, and formed ſome clear Illuſtrations, and eaſie Similies to make it underſtood; his *Catechetical Diſcourſes*, during all the reſt of his Life, will be only the going over that ſame Matter again and again; by this means his People will come to have all this by heart; they will know what to ſay upon it at home to their Children; and they will underſtand all his Sermons the better, when they have once had a clear Notion of all thoſe Terms that muſt run through them; for thoſe not being underſtood, renders them all unintelligible. A Diſcourſe of this ſort would be generally of much greater Edification than an Afternoons Sermon; it ſhould not be too long; too much muſt not be ſaid at a time, nor more than one Point opened; a

Quarter

Quarter of an Hour is time ſufficient; for it will grow tedious and be too little remembred, if it is half an hour long. This would draw an Aſſembly to Evening Prayers, which we ſee are but too much neglected, when there is no ſort of Diſcourſe or Sermon accompanying them. And the practiſing this, during the Six Months of the year, in which the days are long, would be a very effectual means, both to Inſtruct the People, and to bring them to a more Religious Obſervation of the Lord's Day; which is one of the powerfulleſt Inſtruments for the carrying on, and advancing of Religion in the World.

With *Catechiſing*, a Miniſter is to joyn the preparing thoſe whom he Inſtructs to be *Confirmed*; which is not to be done merely upon their being able to ſay over ſo many words by *Rote*. It is their renewing their Baptiſmal Vow in their own Perſons, which the Church deſigns by that *Office*; and the bearing in their own Minds, a Senſe of their being bound immediately by that, which their Sureties then undertook for them: Now to do this in ſuch a manner, as that it may make

Impreſſion,

Impreſſion, and have a due effect upon them, they muſt ſtay, till they themſelves underſtand what they do, and till they have ſome Senſe and Affection to it; and therefore till one is of an Age and Diſpoſition fit to receive the Holy Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, and deſires to be Confirmed, as a ſolemn Preparation and Qualification to it; he is not yet ready for it; for in the common Management of that *Holy Rite*, it is but too viſible, that of thoſe Multitudes that crowd to it, the far greater Part, come merely as if they were to receive the Biſhop's Bleſſing, without any Senſe of the *Vow* made by them, and of their renewing their Baptiſmal Engagements in it.

As for the greateſt and ſolemneſt of all the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, the Commemorating his Death, and the Partaking of it in the *Lord's Supper*; this muſt be well explained to the People, to preſerve them from the extreams of Superſtition and Irreverence; to raiſe in them a great Senſe of the Goodneſs of God, that appeared in the Death of Chriſt; of his Love to us, of the Sacrifice he once offered, and

and of the Intercession which he still continues to make for us: A share in all which is there *Federally* offered to us, upon our coming under Engagements, to answer our Part of the *Covenant*, and to live according to the Rules it sets us: On these things he ought to enlarge himself, not only in his Sermons, but in his *Catechetical Exercises*, and in private Discourses; that so he may give his People right Notions of that Solemn Part of Worship, that he may bring them to delight in it; and may neither fright them from it, by raising their Apprehensions of it to a strictness that may terrifie too much, nor encourage them in the too common Practice of the dead and formal *receiving*, at the great Festivals, as a piece of Decency recommended by Custom.

About the time of the Sacrament, every Minister that knows any one of his Parish guilty of eminent Sins, ought to go and Admonish him to change his Course of Life, or not to profane the *Table of the Lord*; and if private Admonitions have no Effect; then if his Sins are Publick and Scandalous, he ought to deny him the Sacrament; and

and upon that he ought to take the Method which is ſtill left in the Church, to make Sinners *aſhamed*, to *ſeparate* them from *Holy things*, till they have edified the *Church* as much by their *Repentance*, and the outward Profeſſion of it, as they had formerly ſcandalized it by their *Diſorders*. This we muſt confeſs, that though we have great Reaſon, to lament our want of the *Godly Diſcipline that was in the Primitive Church*, yet we have ſtill Authority for a great deal *more* than we put in *Practice*. Scandalous Perſons ought, and might be more frequently preſented than they are, and both Private and Publick Admonitions might be more uſed than they are. There is a flatneſs in all theſe things among us. Some are willing to do nothing, becauſe they cannot do all that they ought to do; whereas the right way for procuring an enlargement of our *Authority*, is to uſe that we have *well*; not as an Engine to gratifie our own or other Peoples Paſſions, not to vex People, not to look after Fees, more than the Correction of Manners, or the Edification of the People. If we began much with private Applications, and brought

none into our Courts, till it was viſible that all other ways had been unſucceſsful, and that no regard was had either to Perſons or Parties, to Men's Opinions or Intereſts, we might again bring our Courts into the eſteem which they ought to have, but which they have almoſt entirely loſt: We can never hope to bring the World to bear the *Yoke of Chriſt*, and the Order that he has appointed to be kept up in his Church, *of noting thoſe that walk diſorderly, of ſeparating our ſelves from them, of having no fellowſhip, no, not ſo much as to eat with them*, as long as we give them cauſe to apprehend, that we intend by this to bring them under our *Yoke*, to ſubdue them to us, and *to rule them with a Rod of Iron*: For the truth is, Mankind is ſo ſtrongly compounded, that it is very hard to reſtrain *Eccleſiaſtical Tyranny* on the one hand, without running to a *Lawleſs Licentiouſneſs* on the other; ſo ſtrongly does the World love Extreams, and avoid a Temper.

Now I have gone through the Publick Functions of a Prieſt, and in ſpeaking of the laſt of theſe, I have broke in upon the Third Head of his Duty, his

his *private Labours* in his Pariſh. He underſtands little the Nature and the Obligations of the *Prieſtly Office*, who thinks he has diſcharged it, by performing the Publick Appointments, in which if he is defective, the Laws of the Church, how feeble ſoever they may be as to other things, will have their Courſe; but as the private Duties of the *Paſtoral Care*, are things upon which the Cogniſance of the Law cannot fall, ſo they are the moſt important and neceſſary of all others; and the more Praiſe Worthy, the freer they are, and the leſs forc'd by the Compulſion of Law. As to the Publick Functions, every Man has his Rule; and in theſe all are almoſt alike; every Man, eſpecially if his Lungs are good, can read Prayers, even in the largeſt Congregation; and if he has a right Taſte, and can but chooſe good Sermons, out of the many that are in Print, he may likewiſe ſerve them well that way too. But the difference between one Man and another, ſhews it ſelf more ſenſibly in his *private Labours*, in his prudent Deportment, in his modeſt and diſcreet Way of procuring Reſpect to himſelf, in his Treating his *Pariſh*, ei-

ther in reconciling ſuch Differences as may happen to be among them, or in Admoniſhing Men of Rank, who ſet an ill Example to others, which ought always to be done in that way, which will probably have the beſt effect upon them; therefore it muſt be done ſecretly, and with Expreſſions of Tenderneſs and Reſpect for their Perſons; fit times are to be choſen for this; it may be often the beſt way to do it by a Letter: For there may be ways fallen upon, of reproving the worſt Men, in ſo ſoft a manner, that if they are not reclaimed, yet they ſhall not be irritated or made worſe by it, which is but too often the Effect of an indiſcreet Reproof. By this a Miniſter *may* ſave the Sinners Soul; he is at leaſt *ſure* to ſave his own, by having diſcharged his Duty towards his People.

One of the chief Parts of the *Paſtoral Care*, is the *viſiting the ſick*; not to be done barely when one is ſent for: He is to go as ſoon as he hears that any of his Flock are ill; He is not to ſatisfie himſelf with going over the *Office*, or giving them the *Sacrament* when deſired: He ought to inform himſelf of their Courſe of Life, and of the Temper of their

their Mind, that ſo he may apply himſelf to them accordingly. If they are inſenſible, he ought to awaken them with the Terrours of God; the Judgment and the Wrath to come. He muſt endeavour to make them ſenſible of their Sins; particularly of that which runs through moſt Men's Lives, their forgetting and neglecting God and his Service, and their ſetting their Hearts ſo inordinately upon the World: He muſt ſet them on to examine their dealings, and make them ſeriouſly to conſider, that they can expect no Mercy from God, unleſs they reſtore whatſoever they may have got unjuſtly from any other, by any manner of way, even though their Title were confirmed by Law: He is to lay any other Sins to their charge, that he has reaſon to ſuſpect them guilty of; and muſt preſs them to all ſuch Acts of Repentance as they are then capable of. If they have been Men of a bad Courſe of Life, he muſt give them no encouragement to hope much from this *Death-bed Repentance*; yet he is to ſet them to Implore the *Mercies of God in Chriſt Jeſus*, and to do all they can to obtain his Favour. But unleſs the Sickneſs has been

of a long continuance, and that the Perſon's Repentance, his Patience, his Piety has been very extraordinary, during the Courſe of it, he muſt be ſure to give him no poſitive ground of *Hope*; but leave him to the *Mercies of God*. For there cannot be any greater Treachery to Souls, that is more fatal and more pernicious, than the giving quick and eaſie hopes, upon ſo ſhort, ſo forced, and ſo imperfect a Repentance. It not only makes thoſe Perſons periſh ſecurely themſelves, but it leads all about them to deſtruction; when they ſee one, of whoſe *bad Life* and *late Repentance* they have been the Witneſſes, put ſo ſoon in hopes, nay by ſome unfaithful Guides, made *ſure* of Salvation; this muſt make them go on very ſecure in their Sins; when they ſee how ſmall a meaſure of *Repentance* ſets all right at laſt: All the Order and Juſtice of a Nation, would be preſently diſſolved, ſhould the howlings of *Criminals*, and their Promiſes of Amendment, work on *Juries*, *Judges*, or *Princes*: So the hopes that are given to *Death-bed Penitents*, muſt be a moſt effectual means to root out the Senſe of Religion of the Minds of all that ſee it;

and

and therefore though no dying Man is to be driven to *Despair*, and left to die obstinate in his Sins; yet if we love the Souls of our People, if we set a due value on the Blood of Christ, and if we are touched with any Sense of the Honour or Interests of Religion, we must not say any thing that may encourage others, who are but too apt of themselves to put all off to the last Hour. We can give them no hopes from the Nature of the *Gospel Covenant*; yet after all, the best thing a dying Man can do, is to *Repent*; if he recovers, that may be the Seed and Beginning of a new Life and a new Nature in him: Nor do we know the Measure of the *Riches of God's Grace and Mercy*; how far he may think fit to exert it beyond the Conditions and Promises of the *New Covenant*, at least to the lessening of such a Persons Misery in another State. We are sure he is not within the *New Covenant*; and since he has not *repented*, according to the *Tenor* of it, we dare not, unless we betray our Commission, give any hopes beyond it. But one of the chief Cares of a Minister about the Sick, ought to be to exact of them Solemn Vows and Promises, of a Renovation of Life,

in caſe God ſhall raiſe them up again; and theſe ought to be demanded, not only in general Words, but if they have been guilty of any ſcandalous Diſorders, or any other ill Practices, there ought to be ſpecial Promiſes made with Relation to thoſe. And upon the Recovery of ſuch Perſons, their Miniſters ought to put them in mind of their Engagements, and uſe all the due freedom of Admonitions and Reproof, upon their breaking looſe from them. In ſuch a Caſe they ought to leave a terrible denunciation of the Judgments of God upon them, and ſo at leaſt they acquit themſelves.

There is another ſort of *ſick Perſons*, who abound more in *Towns* than in the Country; thoſe are the troubled in Mind; of theſe there are two ſorts, ſome have committed enormous Sins, which kindle a Storm in their Conſciences; and that ought to be cheriſhed, till they have compleated a Repentance proportioned to the Nature and Degree of their Sin. If *Wrong* has been done to another, *Reparation* and *Reſtitution* muſt be made to the utmoſt of the Party's Power. If *Blood* has been ſhed, a long courſe of Faſting and Prayer; a

total

total abstinence from *Wine*; if *Drunkenness* gave the rise to it, a making up the loss to the Family, on which it has fallen, must be enjoyned. But alas, the greater part of those that think they are troubled in Mind, are Melancholy hypochondriacal People, who, what through some false Opinions in Religion, what through a foulness of Blood, occasioned by their unactive Course of Life, in which their Minds work too much, because their Bodies are too little imployed, fall under dark and cloudy Apprehensions; of which they can give no clear nor good Account. This, in the greatest Part, is to be removed by strong and *Chalybeate* Medicines; yet such Persons are to be much pitied, and a little humoured in their Distemper. They must be diverted from thinking too much, being too much alone, or dwelling too long on Thoughts that are too hard for them to Master.

The Opinion that has had the chief Influence in raising these Distempers, has been that of *Praying by the Spirit*; when a flame of Thought, a melting in the Brain, and the abounding in tender expressions, have been thought the Effects of the *Spirit*, moving all those Symptoms

toms of a warm Temper. Now in all People, eſpecially in Perſons of a Melancholy Diſpoſition, that are much alone, there will be a great diverſity, with relation to this at different times: Sometimes theſe Heats will riſe and flow copiouſly, and at other times there will be a damp upon the Brain, and a dead dryneſs in the Spirits. This to men that are prepoſſeſſed with the Opinion, now ſet forth, will appear as if God did ſometimes *ſhine out*, and at other times *hide his face*; and ſince this laſt will be the moſt frequent in men of that Temper; as they will be apt to be lifted up, when they think they have a *fulneſs of the Spirit* in them, ſo they will be as much caſt down when that is withdrawn; they will conclude from it, that *God is angry with them*, and ſo reckon that they muſt be in a very dangerous Condition: Upon this, a vaſt variety of troubleſom Scruples will ariſe, out of every thing that they either do or have done. If then a Miniſter has occaſion to treat any in this Condition, he muſt make them apprehend that the heat or coldneſs of their Brain, is the effect of *Temper*; and flows from the different State of the *Animal Spirits*, which

which have their Diſeaſes, their hot and their cold Fits, as well as the Blood has; and therefore no meaſure can be taken from theſe, either to Judge for or againſt themſelves. They are to conſider what are their Principles and Reſolutions, and what's the ſettled Courſe of their Life; upon theſe they are to form ſure Judgments, and not upon any thing that is ſo fluctuating and inconſtant as Fits or Humours.

Another part of a Prieſt's Duty is, with relation to them *that are without*, I mean, that are not of our Body, which are of the ſide of the *Church of Rome*, or among the *Diſſenters*. Other Churches and Bodies are noted for their Zeal, in making *Proſelytes*, for their reſtleſs Endeavours, as well as their unlawful Methods in it, they reckoning, perhaps, that all will be ſanctified by the encreaſing their Party, which is the true name of *making Converts*, except they become at the ſame time *Good Men*, as well as Votaries to a Side or Cauſe. We are certainly very remiſs in this, of both hands, little pains is taken to gain either upon *Papiſt* or *Nonconformiſt*; the Law has been ſo much truſted to; that that method only was thought ſure; it

was

was much valued, and others at the ſame time as much neglected; and whereas at firſt, without force or violence, in Fourty years time, *Popery* from being the prevailing Religion, was reduced to a *handful*, we have now in above twice that number of years, made very little Progreſs. The favour ſhew'd them from our Court, made us ſeem, as it were, unwilling to diſturb them in their Religion; ſo that we grow at laſt to be kind to them, to look on them as harmleſs and inoffenſive Neighbours, and even to cheriſh and comfort them; we were very near the being convinc'd of our miſtake, by a terrible and dear bought *Experience*. Now they are again under Hatches; certainly it becomes us, both in Charity to them, and in regard to our own Safety, to ſtudy to gain them by the force of Reaſon and Perſuaſion; by ſhewing all kindneſs to them, and thereby diſpoſing them to hearken to the Reaſons that we may lay before them. We ought not to give over this as deſperate upon a few unſucceſsful Attempts, but muſt follow them in the *meekneſs of Chriſt*, that ſo we may at laſt prove happy Inſtruments, in delivering them from the Blindneſs and Captivity they are kept under, and the

Idolatry

Idolatry and Superſtition they live in: We ought to viſit them often in a Spirit of Love and Charity, and to offer them Conferences; and upon ſuch Endeavours, we have reaſon to expect a Bleſſing, at leaſt this, of having done our Duty, and ſo delivering our own Souls.

Nor are we to think, that the *Toleration*, under which the Law has ſettled the *Diſſenters*, does either abſolve them from the Obligations that they lay under before, by the Laws of God and the Goſpel, to maintain the *Unity of the Church*, and not to rent it by unjuſt or cauſeleſs Schiſms, or us from uſing our endeavours to bring them to it, by the methods of Perſwaſion and Kindneſs: Nay, perhaps, their being now in Circumſtances, that they can no more be *forced* in theſe things, may put ſome of them in a greater towardneſs to hear Reaſon; a Free Nation naturally hating Conſtraint: And certainly the leſs we ſeem to grudge or envy them their *Liberty*, we will be thereby the nearer gaining on the generouſer and better Part of them, and the reſt would ſoon loſe Heart, and look out of Countenance; if theſe ſhould hearken to us. It was the Opinion many

ny had of their *ſtrictneſs*, and of the *looſeneſs* that was amongſt us, that gained them their Credit, and made ſuch numbers fall off from us. They have in a great meaſure loſt the *Good Character* that once they had; if to that we ſhould likewiſe loſe our *bad one*; if we were ſtricter in our Lives, more ſerious and conſtant in our Labours; and ſtudied more effectually to Reform thoſe of our Communion, than to rail at theirs; If we took occaſion to let them ſee that we love them, that we wiſh them no harm, but good, then we might hope, by the Bleſſing of God, to lay the Obligations to Love and Peace, to Unity and Concord before them, with ſuch Advantages, that ſome of them might open their Eyes, and ſee at laſt upon how ſlight Grounds, they have now ſo long kept up ſuch a Wrangling, and made ſuch a Rent in the Church, that both the *Power of Religion* in general, and the ſtrength of the *Proteſtant Religion*, have ſuffered extreamly by them.

Thus far I have carried a *Clerk* through his Pariſh, and all the ſeveral Branches of his Duty to his People.

But

But that all this may be well gone about, and indeed as the Foundation upon which all the other Parts of the Paſtoral Care may be well managed, he ought frequently to viſit his whole Pariſh *from Houſe to Houſe*; that ſo he may know them, and be known of them. This I know will ſeem a vaſt Labour, eſpecially in *Towns*, where Pariſhes are large; but that is no excuſe for thoſe in the Country, where they are generally ſmall; and if they are larger, the going this Round will be the longer a doing; yet an hour a day, Twice or Thrice a Week, is no hard Duty; and this in the Compaſs of a Year will go a great way, even in a large *Pariſh*. In theſe Viſits, much Time is not to be ſpent; a ſhort Word for ſtirring them up to mind their Souls, to make Conſcience of their Ways, and to pray earneſtly to God, may begin it, and almoſt end it. After one has asked in what Union and Peace the Neighbourhood lives, and enquired into their Neceſſities, if they ſeem very Poor, that ſo thoſe to whom that Care belongs, may be put in

in mind to ſee how they may be relieved. In this courſe of viſiting, a Miniſter will ſoon find out, if there are any truly *Good Perſons* in his *Pariſh*, after whom he muſt look with a more particular regard. Since theſe are the *Excellent ones, in whom all his delight ought to be.* For let their Rank be ever ſo mean, if they are ſincerely Religious, and not Hypocritical Pretenders to it, who are vainly puffed up with ſome Degrees of Knowledge, and other outward Appearances, he ought to conſider them as the moſt valuable in the ſight of God; and indeed, as the chief Part of his Care; for *a living Dog is better than a dead Lion.* I know this way of Parochial Viſitation, is ſo worn out, that, perhaps, neither Prieſt nor People, will be very deſirous to ſee it taken up. It will put the one to Labour and Trouble, and bring the other under a cloſer Inſpection, which bad Men will no ways deſire, nor perhaps endure. But if this were put on the *Clergy* by their *Biſhops*, and if they explained in a Sermon before they began it, the Reaſons and Ends of doing it;

that

that would remove the Prejudices which might ariſe againſt it. I confeſs this is an encreaſe of Labour, but that will ſeem no hard matter to ſuch as have a right Senſe of their *Ordination-Vows*, of the value of *Souls*, and of the Dignity of their *Function*. If Men had the *Spirit of their Calling* in them, and a due meaſure of Flame and Heat in carrying it on; *Labour* in it would be rather a Pleaſure than a Trouble. In all other Profeſſions, thoſe who follow them, labour in them all the Year long, and are hard at their Buſineſs every Day of the Week. All Men that are well ſuted in a Profeſſion, that is agreeable to their Genius and Inclination, are really the eaſier and the better pleaſed, the more they are employed in it. Indeed there is no Trade nor Courſe of Life, except *Ours*, that does not take up the whole Man: And ſhall *Ours* only, that is the Nobleſt of all others, and that has a certain Subſiſtence fixed upon it, and does not live by *Contingencies*, and upon *Hopes*, as all others do, make the labouring in our Buſineſs, an Objection againſt any part of our *Duty*? Certainly nothing can ſo much diſpoſe the Nation, to think on the relieving the Neceſſities of the many ſmall Livings, as the ſeeing the Clergy

ſetting about their Buſineſs to purpoſe; this would, by the Bleſſing of God, be a moſt effectual Means, of ſtopping the Progreſs of *Atheiſm*, and of the *Contempt* that the Clergy lies under; it would go a great way towards the healing our Schiſm, and would be the chief ſtep that could poſſibly be made, towards the procuring to us ſuch Laws as are yet wanting to the compleating our Reformation, and the mending the Condition of ſo many of our poor Brethren, who are languiſhing in Want, and under great Straits.

There remains only ſomewhat to be added concerning the Behaviour of the *Clergie* towards one another. Thoſe of a higher Form in Learning, Dignity and Wealth, ought not to deſpiſe poor *Vicars* and *Curates*; but on the contrary, the poorer they are, they ought to pity and encourage them the more, ſince they are all of the ſame *Order*, only the one are more happily placed than the others: They ought therefore to cheriſh thoſe that are in worſe Circumſtances, and encourage them to come often to them; they ought to lend them Books, and to give them other Aſſiſtances in order to

their

their progress in Learning. 'Tis a bad thing to see a *Bishop* behave himself superciliously towards any of his *Clergy*, but it is intolerable in those of the *same Degree*. The Clergy ought to contrive Ways to meet often together, to enter into a brotherly Correspondence, and into the Concerns one of another, both in order to their progress in Knowledg, and for consulting together in all their Affairs. This would be a means to cement them into one Body: hereby they might understand what were amiss in the Conduct of any in their Division, and try to correct it either by private Advices and Endeavours, or by laying it before the *Bishop*, by whose private *Labours*, if his *Clergy* would be assisting to him, and give him free and full Informations of things, many Disorders might be cured, without rising to a publick Scandal, or forcing him to extream Censures. It is a false Pity in any of the Clergy, who see their Brethren running into ill Courses, to look on and say nothing: it is a Cruelty to the Church, and may prove a Cruelty to the Person of whom they are so unseasonably tender: for things may be more easily corrected at first, before they have grown to be publick, or are

hardned by Habit and Cuſtom. Upon all theſe Accounts it is of great advantage, and may be Matter of great Edification to the *Clergie*, to enter into a ſtrict Union together, to meet often, and to be helpful to one another: but if this ſhould be made practicable, they muſt be extreamly ſtrict in thoſe *Meetings*, to obſerve ſo exact a *Sobriety*, that there might be no Colour given to cenſure them, as if theſe were *merry Meetings*, in which they allowed themſelves great Liberties: it were good, if they could be brought to meet to *faſt and pray*; but if that is a ſtrain too high for the preſent Age, at leaſt they muſt keep ſo far within bounds, that there may be no room for Calumny. For a Diſorder upon any ſuch Occaſion, would give a Wound of an extraordinary Nature to the Reputation of the whole *Clergy*, when every one would bear a Share of the Blame, which perhaps belonged but to a few. Four or five ſuch Meetings in a Summer, would neither be a great Charge, nor give much Trouble: but the Advantages that might ariſe out of them, would be very ſenſible.

I have but one other Advice to add, but it is of a thing of great conſequence, though generally managed in ſo looſe

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and ſo indifferent a Manner, that I have ſome reaſon in Charity to believe, that the *Clergy* make very little Reflection on what they do in it: And that is, in the Teſtimonials that they ſign in *favour* of thoſe that come to be *Ordained.* Many have confeſſed to my ſelf, that they had ſigned theſe upon general Reports, and Importunity; tho the Teſtimonial bears perſonal Knowledg. Theſe are inſtead of the *Suffrages* of the Clergy, which in the Primitive Church were given before any were *Ordained.* A Biſhop muſt depend upon them; for he has no other way to be certainly informed: and therefore as it is a Lie, paſs'd with the Solemnity of *Hand* and *Seal*, to affirm any thing that is beyond one's own Knowledg, ſo it is a *Lie* made to *God* and the *Church*; ſince the deſign of it is to procure *Orders.* So that if a Biſhop truſting to *that*, and being ſatisfied of the Knowledg of one that brings it, ordains an unfit and unworthy Man, they that ſigned it, are deeply and chiefly involved in the Guilt of his laying Hands ſuddenly upon him: therefore every Prieſt ought to charge his Conſcience in a deep particular Manner, that ſo he may never teſtify for any one, unleſs he knows his Life to

be so regular, and believes his Temper to be so good, that he does really judg him a Person fit to be put in Holy Orders. These are all the Rules that do occur to me at present.

In performing these several Branches of the Duty of a Pastor, the trouble will not be great, if he is truly a good Man, and delights in the Service of God, and in doing Acts of Charity: the Pleasure will be unspeakable; first, that of the Conscience in this Testimony that it gives, and the Quiet and Joy which arises from the Sense of one's having done his Duty: and then it can scarce be supposed but by all this, some will be wrought on; some Sinners will be reclaimed; bad Men will grow good, and good Men will grow better. And if a generous Man feels to a great degree, the Pleasure of having delivered one from Misery, and of making him easy and happy; how soveraign a Joy must it be to a Man that believes there is another Life, to see that he has been an Instrument to rescue some from endless Misery, and to further others in the way to everlasting Happiness? and the more Instances he sees of this, the more do his Joys grow upon him. This makes Life happy, and Death joyful

joyful to ſuch a Prieſt, for he is not terrified with thoſe words, *Give an Account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer Steward:* He knows his Reward ſhall be full, preſſed down, and running over. He is but too happy in thoſe *Spiritual Children*, whom he has *begot in Chriſt*, he looks after thoſe as the chief part of his Care, and as the principal of his *Flock*, and is ſo far from aſpiring, that it is not without ſome Uneaſineſs that he leaves them, if he is commanded to ariſe to ſome higher Poſt in the Church.

The Troubles of this Life, the Cenſures of bad Men, and even the proſpect of a Perſecution, are no dreadful Things to him that has this *Seal of his Miniſtry*; and this Comfort within him, that he has not *laboured in vain*, nor *run and fought as one that beats the Air*; *he ſees the Travel of his Soul, and is ſatisfied when he finds that God's Work proſpers in his hand.* This comforts him in his ſad Reflections on his own paſt Sins, that he has been an Inſtrument of advancing God's Honour, of ſaving Souls, and of propagating his Goſpel; Since to have ſaved one Soul, is worth a Man's coming into the World, and richly worth the Labours of his whole Life. Here is a Subject that might

be eaſily proſecuted by many warm and lively Figures: But I now go on to the laſt Article relating to this Matter.

CHAP. IX.

Concerning Preaching.

THE World naturally runs to Extreams in every thing. If one Sect or Body of Men magnify Preaching too much, another carries that to another Extream of decrying it as much. It is certainly a noble and a profitable Exerciſe, if rightly gone about, of great uſe both to Prieſt and People; by obliging the one to much Study and Labour, and by ſetting before the other full and copious Diſcoveries of Divine Matters, opening them clearly, and preſſing them weightily upon them. It has alſo now gained ſo much Eſteem in the World, that a Clergyman cannot maintain his Credit, nor bring his People to a conſtant Attendance on the Worſhip of God, unleſs he is happy in theſe Performances.

I will not run out into the *Hiſtory of Preaching*, to ſhew how *late* it was before it

it was brought into the Church, and by what *ſteps it* grew up to the *pitch* it is now at: How long it was before the Roman Church uſed it, and in how many different ſhapes it has appeared. Some of the firſt Patterns we have, are the beſt: for as *Tully* began the *Roman Eloquence*, and likewiſe ended it, no Man being able to hold up to the pitch to which he raiſed it; ſo St. *Baſil* and St. *Chryſoſtom* brought Preaching from the dry purſuing of *Allegories* that had vitiated *Origen*, and from the exceſſive Affectation of Figures and Rhetorick that appears in *Nazianzen*, to a due Simplicity; a native Force and Beauty, having joined to the Plainneſs of a clear but noble Stile, the Strength of Reaſon, and the Softneſs of Perſuaſion. Some were diſguſted at this Plainneſs; and they brought in a great deal of Art into the Compoſition of Sermons: Myſtical Applications of Scripture grew to be better liked than clear Texts; an Accumulation of Figures, a Cadence in the Periods, a playing upon the Sounds of Words, a Loftineſs of Epithets, and often an Obſcurity of Expreſſion, were according to the different Taſtes of the ſeveral Ages run into. Preaching has paſt through many different Forms among

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us, since the Reformation. But without flattering the present Age, or any Persons now alive, too much, it must be confessed, that it is brought of late to a much greater Perfection, than it was ever before at among us. It is certainly brought nearer the Pattern that S. *Chrysostom* has set, or perhaps carried beyond it. Our Language is much refined, and we have returned to the plain Notions of simple and genuine Rhetorick.

We have so vast a number of excellent Performances in Print, that if a Man has but a right understanding of Religion, and a true relish of good Sense, he may easily furnish himself this way. The impertinent Way of dividing Texts is laid aside, the needless setting out of the Originals, and the vulgar Version, is worn out. The trifling Shews of Learning in many Quotations of Passages, that very few could understand, do no more flat the Auditory. *Pert Wit* and *luscious Eloquence* have lost their relish. So that Sermons are reduced to the plain opening the Meaning of the Text, in a few short Illustrations of its Coherence with what goes before and after, and of the Parts of which it is composed; to that is joined the clear stating of such Propositions as arise

ariſe out of it, in their Nature, Truth and Reaſonableneſs: by which, the Hearers may form clear Notions of the ſeveral Parts of Religion; ſuch as are beſt ſuted to their Capacities and Apprehenſions; to all which Applications are added, tending to the Reproving, Directing, Encouraging, or Comforting the Hearers, according to the ſeveral Occaſions that are offered.

This is indeed all that can be truly be intended in Preaching, to make ſome Portions of Scripture to be rightly underſtood; to make thoſe Truths contain'd in them, to be more fully apprehended; and then to lay the Matter home to the Conſciences of the Hearers, ſo directing all to ſome good and practical end. In the choice of the *Text*, care is to be taken not to chuſe *Texts* that ſeem to have Humour in them; or that muſt be long wrought upon, before they are underſtood. The plainer a Text is in it ſelf, the ſooner it is cleared, and the fuller it is of Matter of Inſtruction; and therefore ſuch ought to be choſen to common Auditories. Many will remember the *Text*, that remember nothing elſe; therefore ſuch a choice ſhould be made, as may at leaſt put a weighty and ſpeaking Sentence

tence of the Scriptures upon the Memories of the People. A Sermon ſhould be made for a *Text*, and not a *Text* found out for a *Sermon*; for to give our Diſcourſes weight, it ſhould appear that we are led to them by our *Texts*: ſuch Sermons will probably have much more Efficacy than a general Diſcourſe, before which a *Text* ſeems only to be read as a decent Introduction, but to which no regard is had in the Progreſs of it. Great Care ſhould be alſo had both in opening the Text, and of that which ariſes from it to illuſtrate them, by concurrent Paſſages of Scripture: a little of this ought to be in every Sermon, and but a little: for the People are not to be over-charged with too much of it at a time; and this ought to be done with judgment, and not made a bare *Concordance* Exerciſe, of citing Scriptures, that have the ſame Words, though not to the ſame purpoſe and in the ſame ſenſe. A Text being opened, then the Point upon which the Sermon is to run is to be opened; and it will be the better heard and underſtood, if there is but one Point in a Sermon; ſo that one Head, and only one is well ſtated, and fully ſet out. In this, great regard is to be had to the Nature of the

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Auditory, that ſo the Point explained may be in ſome meaſure proportioned to them. Too cloſe a Thread of Reaſon, too great an Abſtraction of Thought, too ſublime and too metaphiſical a Strain, are ſutable to very few Auditories, if to any at all.

Things muſt be put in a clear Light, and brought out in as ſhort Periods, and in as plain Words as may be: The Reaſons of them muſt be made as ſenſible to the People as is poſſible; as in Vertues and Vices; their Tendencies and Effects; their being ſutable or unſutable to our Powers, to both Souls and Bodies, to the Intereſts of this Life as well as the next; and the Good or Evil that they do to Humane Societies, Families and Neighbourhoods, ought to be fully and frequently opened. In ſetting theſe forth, ſuch a Meaſure is to be kept, that the Hearers may perceive, that things are not ſtrained in the Way of a Declamation, into forced Characters, but that they are ſet out, as truly they are, without making them ſeem better by imaginary Perfections, or worſe by an undue Aggravation. For the carrying thoſe Matters beyond the plain Obſervation of Mankind, makes that the Whole is looked

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on as a piece of Rhetorick; the Preacher ſeeming to intend rather to ſhew his Skill, is raiſing his Subject too high, or running it down too low, than to lay before them the native Conſequences of things; and that which upon Reflection they may be all able to perceive is really true. *Vertue* is ſo good in it ſelf, that it needs no falſe Paint to make it look better: and *Vice* is ſo bad, that it can never look ſo ugly, as when ſhewed in its own natural Colours. So that an undue *Sublime* in ſuch Deſcriptions, does hurt, and can do no good.

When the Explanatory Part of the Sermon is over, the Application comes next: and here great Judgment muſt be uſed, to make it fall the heavieſt, and lie the longeſt, upon ſuch Particulars as may be within the compaſs of the Auditory: Directions concerning a high Devotion, to a ſtupid ignorant Company; or of Generoſity and Bounty, to very poor People; againſt Pride and Ambition, to ſuch as are dull and low minded, are ill ſuted; and ſo muſt have little effect upon them. Therefore care muſt be taken that the Application be uſeful and proper; that it make the Hearers apprehend ſom of their Sins and Defects, and ſee how

to perform their Duty; that it awaken them to it, and direct them in it: and therefore the moſt common Sins, ſuch as Mens neglecting their Duty to God, in the ſeveral Branches of it; their ſetting their Hearts inordinately upon the World; their Lying in Diſcourſe, but chiefly in Bargaining; their evil Speaking, and their Hatred and Malice, ought to be very often brought in. Some one or other of theſe, ought to be in every Application that is made, by which they may ſee, that the whole deſign of Religion lies againſt them. Such particular Sins, Swearing, Drunkenneſs, or Leudneſs as abound in any place, muſt likewiſe be frequently brought in here. The Application muſt be clear and ſhort, very weighty, and free of every thing that looks like the Affectations of Wit and Eloquence; here the Preacher muſt be all Heart and Soul, deſigning the good of his People. The whole Sermon is directed to this: therefore as it is fit that the chief Point which a Sermon drives at, ſhould come often over and over, that ſo the Hearers may never loſe ſight of it, but keep it ſtill in view; ſo in the Application, the Text muſt be ſhewed to ſpeak it; all the Parts of the Explanation muſt come in, to enforce

force it: the Application muſt be opened in the ſeveral Views that it may have; but thoſe muſt be chiefly inſiſted on that are moſt ſutable both to the Capacities and the Circumſtances of the People. And in concluſion, all ought to be ſummed up in a weighty Period or two; and ſome other ſignal Paſſage of the Scriptures relating to it may be ſought for, that ſo the Matter may be left upon the Auditory in the ſolemneſt manner poſſible.

Thus I have led a Preacher through the Compoſition of his Sermon; I will next lay before him ſome Particulars relating to it. The ſhorter Sermons are, they are generally both better heard, and better remembred. The cuſtom of an Hour's length, forces many Preachers to trifle away much of the Time, and to ſpin out their Matter, ſo as to hold out. So great a length does alſo flat the Hearers, and tempt them to ſleep; eſpecially when, as is uſual, the firſt part of the Sermon is languid and heavy: In half an Hour a Man may lay open his Matter in its full extent, and cut off thoſe Superfluities which come in only to lengthen the Diſcourſe: and he may hope to keep up the Attention of his People all the while. As

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to the *Stile*, Sermons ought to be very plain; the Figures must be easy, not mean, but noble, and brought in upon design to make the Matter better understood. The Words in a Sermon must be simple, and in common use; not savouring of the Schools, nor above the understanding of the People. All long *Periods*, such as carry two or three different Thoughts in them, must be avoided; for few Hearers can follow or apprehend these: Niceties of *Stile* are lost before a common Auditory. But if an easy Simplicity of Stile should run through the whole Composition, it should take place most of all in the explanatory part; for the thing being there offered to be understood, it should be stript of all garnishing: *Definitions* should not be offered in the Terms, or Method, that *Logick* directs. In short, a *Preacher* is to fancy himself, as in the room of the most unlearned Man in his whole Parish; and therefore he must put such parts of his Discourse as he would have all understand, in so plain a form of Words, that it may not be beyond the meanest of them: This he will certainly study to do, if his desire is to edify them, rather than to make them admire himself as a learned and high-spoken Man.

But in the Applicatory part, if he has a true taste of Eloquence, and is a Master at it, he is to employ it all in giving sometimes such tender Touches, as may soften; and deeper Gashes, such as may awaken his Hearers. A vain Eloquence here, is very ill plac'd; for if that can be born any where, it is in illustrating the Matter: but all must be grave, where one would perswade: the most natural but the most sensible Expressions come in best here. Such an Eloquence as makes the Hearers look grave, and as it were out of Countenance, is the propereſt. That which makes them look lively, and as it were smile upon one another, may be pretty, but it only tickles the Imagination, and pleases the Ear; whereas that which goes to the Heart, and wounds it, makes the Hearer rather look down, and turns his Thoughts inward, upon himself: For it is certain that a Sermon, the Conclusion whereof makes the Auditory look pleased, and sets them all a talking one with another, was either not right spoken, or not right heard; it has been fine, and has probably delighted the Congregation, rather than edified it. But that Sermon that makes every one go away silent and grave, and hasting to be alone, to meditate or pray

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over the matter of it in ſecret, has had its true effect.

He that has a Taſte and Genius for Eloquence, muſt improve it by reading *Quintilian*, and *Tully*'s Books of *Oratory*; and by obſerving the Spirit and Method of *Tully*'s Orations: or if he can enter into *Demoſthenes*, there he will ſee a much better Pattern, there being a ſimplicity, a ſhortneſs, and a ſwiftneſs, and rapidity in him, that could not be heard without putting his Auditors into a great Commotion. All our Modern Books upon thoſe Subjects, are ſo far ſhort of thoſe great Originals, that they can bear no Compariſon: yet *F. Rapin*'s little Book of *Eloquence* is by much the beſt, only he is too ſhort. *Tully* has ſo fully opened all the Topicks of *Invention*, that a Man who has read him, will, if he has any Invention of his own, and if he knows throughly his Matter, rather have too much than too little in his view, upon every Subject that he treats. This is a Noble Study, and of great uſe to ſuch as have Judgment to manage it; for Artificial Eloquence, without a Flame within, is like Artificial Poetry; all its Productions are forced and unnatural, and in a great meaſure ridiculous. Art helps and

guides Nature; but if one was not born with this *Flame*, Art will only ſpoil him, make him luſcious and redundant. To ſuch Perſons, and indeed to all that are not *Maſters* of the *Body of Divinity*, and of the *Scriptures*, I ſhould much rather recommend the uſing other Mens Sermons, than the making any of their own. But in the choice of theſe, great Judgment muſt be uſed; one muſt not take an Author that is too much above himſelf, for by that, compared with his Ordinary Converſation, it will but too evidently appear, that he cannot be the Author of his own Sermons; and that will make both him and them loſe too much of their weight. He ought alſo to put thoſe printed Sermons out of that ſtrength and cloſeneſs of Stile, which looks very well in print; but is too ſtiff, eſpecially for a common Auditory. He may reverſe the Method a little, and ſhorten the Explanations, that ſo he may retain all that is practical; and that a Man may form himſelf to Preaching, he ought to take ſome of the beſt Models, and try what he can do upon a Text handled by them, without reading them, and then compare his Work with theirs; this will more ſenſibly, and without putting him to the Bluſh,

model

model him to imitate, or if he can, to excel the beſt Patterns: and by this Method, if he will reſtrain himſelf for ſome time, and follow it cloſe, he may come to be able to go without ſuch Crutches, and to work without Patterns: till then, I ſhould adviſe all to make uſe of other Mens Sermons, rather than to make any of their own.

The Nation has got into ſo good a Taſte of *Sermons*, from the vaſt number of thoſe excellent ones that are in print, that a mean Compoſition will be very ill heard; and therefore it is an unſeaſonable piece of Vanity, for any to offer their own Crudities, till they have well digeſted and ripened them. I wiſh the Majeſty of the *Pulpit* were more looked to; and that no Sermons were offered from thence, but ſuch as ſhould make the Hearers both the better, and the wiſer, the more knowing, and the more ſerious.

In the Delivering of *Sermons*, a great Compoſure of Geſture and Behaviour is neceſſary, to give them Weight and Authority: Extreams are bad here, as in every thing elſe; ſome affect a light and flippant Behaviour; and others think that wry Faces and a tone in the Voice, will ſet off the Matter. Grave and compoſed

Looks, and a natural, but diſtinct Pronunciation, will always have the beſt Effects. The great Rule which the Maſters of Rhetorick preſs much, can never be enough remembred; that to make a Man ſpeak well, and pronounce with a right *Emphaſis*, he ought throughly to underſtand all that he ſays, be fully perſuaded of it, and bring himſelf to have thoſe Affections, which he deſires to infuſe into others. He that is inwardly perſuaded of the Truth of what he ſays, and that has a Concern about it in his Mind, will pronounce with a natural Vehemence, that is far more lively, than all the Strains that Art can lead him to. An *Orator*, if we hearken to *them*, muſt be an honeſt Man, and ſpeak always on the ſide of *Truth*, and ſtudy to *feel* all that he ſays; and then he will ſpeak it ſo as to make others *feel* it likewiſe. And therefore ſuch as read their *Sermons*, ought to practiſe Reading much in private, and read aloud, that ſo their own Ear and Senſe may guide them, to know where to raiſe or quicken, ſoften or ſweeten their Voice, and when to give an Articulation of Authority, or of Conviction; where to pauſe, and where to languiſh. We plainly ſee by the *Stage*, what a Force there is in Pronunciation:

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the beſt Compoſitions are murdered, if ill ſpoken; and the worſt are acceptable, when *well ſaid.* In *Tragedies* rightly pronounced and acted, though we know that all is Fable and Fiction; the tender Parts do ſo melt the Company, that Tears cannot be ſtop'd, even by thoſe who laugh at themſelves for it. This ſhews the power of apt Words, and a juſt Pronunciation. But becauſe this depends in a great meaſure, upon the preſent Temper of him that ſpeaks, and the lively Diſpoſition in which he is, therefore he ought by much previous Seriouſneſs, and by earneſt Prayer to God, to endeavour to raiſe his Mind to as warm a ſenſe of the Things he is to ſpeak of, as poſſibly he can, that ſo his Sermons may make deep Impreſſions on his Hearers.

This leads me to conſider the Difference that is between the Reading and the Speaking of Sermons. *Reading* is peculiar to this Nation, and is endured in no other. It has indeed made that our *Sermons* are more exact, and ſo it has produced to us many Volumes of the beſt that are extant; but after all, though ſome few read ſo happily, pronounce ſo truly, and enter ſo entirely into thoſe Affections which they recommend, that in them we ſee both the Correctneſs of

Reading, and the Serioufneſs of *Speaking* Sermons, yet every one is not ſo happy: ſome by hanging their Heads perpetually over their Notes, by blundring as they read, and by a curſory running over them, do ſo leſſen the Matter of their *Sermons*, that as they are generally read with very little *Life* or *Affection*, ſo they are heard with as little regard or eſteem. Thoſe who *read*, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than for moſt part they are, to read true, to pronounce with an *Emphaſis*, and to raiſe their Heads, and to direct their Eyes to their Hearers: and if they practis'd more alone the juſt way of Reading, they might deliver their Sermons with much more advantage. Man is a low ſort of Creature; he does not, nay nor the greater part cannot conſider things in themſelves, without thoſe little Seaſonings that muſt recommend them to their Affections. That a Diſcourſe be heard with any *Life*, it muſt be ſpoken with *ſome*; and the Looks and Motions of the Eye do carry in them ſuch Additions to what is ſaid, that where theſe do not at all concur, it has not all the Force upon them, that otherwiſe it might have: beſides, that the People, who are too apt to cenſure the Clergy, are eaſily

ſily carried into an obvious Reflection on *Reading*, that it is an Effect of Lazineſs.

In pronouncing *Sermons*, there are two Ways; the one is when a whole Diſcourſe is got by heart, and delivered word for word, as it was writ down: this is ſo vaſt a Labour, that it is ſcarce poſſible that a Man can be able to hold up long to it: Yet there is an Advantage even in this to Beginners; it fills their Memories with good Thoughts, and regular Meditations: and when they have got ſome of the moſt important of their Sermons by heart in ſo exact a manner, they are thereby furniſhed with Topicks for Diſcourſe. And therefore there are at leaſt two different Subjects, on which I wiſh all Preachers would be at the pains, to form Sermons well in their Memories: the one is the Grounds of the *Covenant of Grace*, of both ſides, God's offers to us in Chriſt, and the Conditions that he has required of us, in order to our Reconciliation with him. This is ſo important a Point, in the whole courſe of our Miniſtry, that no Man ought to be to ſeek in the opening or explaining it: and therefore that he may be ripe in it, he ought to have it all rightly laid in his Memory,

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not only as to the Notions of it, but to have ſuch a lively Deſcription and Illuſtration of it all, as to be able to ſpeak of it ſenſibly, fully, and eaſily upon all Occaſions. Another Subject in which every Miniſter ought alſo to be well furniſhed, is concerning *Death* and *Judgment*; that ſo when he viſits the Sick, and, as is common, that the Neighbours come in, he may be able to make a grave Exhortation, in weighty and fit Words, upon thoſe Heads. Leſs than this, I think no Prieſt ought to have in his Memory. But indeed, the more *Sermons* a young Beginner gets by heart, he has ſtill thereby the more Diſcourſe ready upon thoſe Heads; for though the whole Contexture of the Sermon will ſtick no longer than as he has occaſion for it, yet a great deal will ſtay with him: the Idea of the Whole, with the moſt important Parts of it, will remain much longer.

But now I come to propoſe another Method of Preaching, by which a Prieſt may be prepared, after a right View of his Matter, a true Underſtanding his Text, and a Digeſting of his Thoughts upon it into their natural and proper Order, to deliver theſe both more eaſily to himſelf, and with a better Effect both upon

upon Himſelf and his Hearers. To come at this, he muſt be for ſome Years at a great deal of pains to prepare himſelf to it: yet when that is over, the Labour of all the reſt of his Life, as to thoſe Performances, will become very eaſy and very pleaſant to him. The Preparations to this muſt be theſe; Firſt he muſt read the Scriptures very exactly, he muſt have great Portions of them by heart; and he muſt alſo in reading them, make a ſhort Concordance of them in his Memory; that is, he muſt lay together ſuch Paſſages as belong to the ſame Matter; to conſider how far they agree or help to illuſtrate one another, and how the ſame thing is differently expreſſed in them; and what various Ideas or Ways of recommending a thing riſe out of this Concordance. Upon this a Man muſt exerciſe himſelf much, draw Notes of it, and digeſt it well in his Thoughts. Then he muſt be ready with the whole body of Divinity in his Head; he muſt know what Parts come in as Objections to be anſwered, where Difficulties lie, how one Part coheres with another, and gives it Light. He muſt have this very current in his Memory, that he may have things lie before him in one full view; and upon this,

this, he is alſo to work, by making *Tables*, or uſing ſuch other Helps as may lay Matters clearly before him. He is more particularly to lay before him, a Syſtem of Morality, of all Vertues and Vices, and of all the Duties that ariſe out of the ſeveral Relations of Mankind; that he may have this Matter very full in his eye, and know what are the Scriptures that belong to all the Parts of it: he is alſo to make a Collection of all ſuch Thoughts, as he finds either in the Books of the Ancient Philoſophers, (where *Seneca* will be of great uſe to him) or of Chriſtian Authors: he is to ſeparate ſuch Thoughts as are forced, and that do become rather a ſtrained Declamation made only to pleaſe, than a ſolid Diſcourſe deſigned to perſuade. All theſe he muſt gather, or at leaſt ſuch a number of them, as may help him to form a diſtinct Notion of that Matter, ſo as to be able both to open it clearly, and to preſs it with Affection and Vehemence.

Theſe are the Materials that muſt be laid together, the Practice in uſing them comes next; He that then would prepare himſelf to be a Preacher in this Method, muſt accuſtom himſelf to talk freely to himſelf, to let his Thoughts flow from him,

him, eſpecially when he feels an edg and heat upon his Mind; for then happy Expreſſions will come in his Mouth, things will ventilate and open themſelves to him, as he talks them thus in a Soliloquy to himſelf. He muſt alſo be writing many Eſſays upon all ſorts of Subjects; for by writing he will bring himſelf to a correctneſs both in thinking and in ſpeaking: and thus by a hard practice for two or three Years, a Man may render himſelf ſuch a *Maſter* in this *Matter*, that he can never be ſurpriſed, nor will new Thoughts ever dry up upon him. He muſt talk over to himſelf the whole Body of Divinity, and accuſtom himſelf to explain, and prove, to clear Objections, and to apply every part of it to ſome practical uſe. He muſt go through Human Life, in all the Ranks and Degrees of it, and talk over all the Duties of theſe; conſider the advantages or diſadvantages in every one of them, their Relation to one another, the Morality of Actions, the common Vertues and Vices of Mankind; more particularly the Duties of Chriſtians, their Obligations to Meekneſs and Humility, to forgive Injuries, to relieve the Poor, to bear the Croſs, to be patient and contented in every State of Life, to pray much and fervently,

fervently, to rejoice ever in God, and to be always praiſing him, and moſt particularly to be applying ſeriouſly to God through Jeſus Chriſt, for Mercy and Pardon, and for his Grace and Spirit; to be worſhipping him devoutly in publick, and to be delighting frequently to commemorate the Death of Chriſt, and to partake of the Benefits of it. All theſe, I ſay, he muſt talk over and over again to himſelf; he muſt ſtudy to give his Thoughts all the Heat and Flight about them that he can: and if in theſe his Meditations, happy Thoughts, and noble and tender Expreſſions, do at any time offer themſelves, he muſt not loſe them, but write them down; and in his pronouncing over ſuch Diſcourſes to himſelf, he muſt obſerve what Words ſound harſh, and agree ill together; for there is a Muſick in Speaking, as well as in Singing; which a Man, tho not otherwiſe critical in Sounds, will ſoon diſcover. By a very few Years practice of two or three of ſuch Soliloquies a Day, chiefly in the Morning when the Head is cleareſt, and the Spirits are livelieſt, a Man will contract a great eaſineſs both in thinking and ſpeaking.

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But the Rule I have reserved last, is the most necessary of all, and without it all the rest will never do the Business; it is this, That a Man must have in himself a deep sense of the Truth and Power of Religion; he must have a Life and Flame in his Thoughts, with relation to those Subjects: He must have felt in himself those things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. He must observe narrowly the motions of his own Mind, the good and bad Effects that the several sorts of Objects he has before him, and Affections he feels within him, have upon him; that so he may have a lively Heat in himself, when he speaks of them; and that he may speak in so sensible a manner, that it may be almost felt that he speaks from his Heart. There is an Authority in the simplest Things that can be said, when they carry visible Characters of Genuineness in them. Now if a Man can carry on this Method, and by much Meditation and Prayer draw down Divine Influences, which are always to be expected, when a Man puts himself in the way of them, and prepares himself for them; he will often feel, that *while he is musing, a Fire is kindled within him*, and then he will *speak with Authority*, and without

out Constraint; his Thoughts will be true, and his Expressions free and easy: Sometimes this Fire will carry him, as it were, out of himself; and yet without any thing that is Frantick or Enthusiastical. Discourses brought forth with a lively Spirit and Heat, where a composed Gesture, and the proper Motions of the Eye and Countenance, and the due Modulations of the Voice concur, will have all the effect that can be expected from any thing that is below immediate Inspiration: and as this will be of use to the Hearers, so it will be of vast use to the Preacher himself, to oblige him to keep his Heart always in good Tune and Temper; not to suffer irregular or forbidden Appetites, Passions, or Projects to possess his Mind: these will both divert him from going on in the course of Meditation, in which a Man must continue many Years, till all his Thoughts are put in order, polish'd and fixed; they will make him likewise speak much against the grain, with an Aversion that will be very sensible to himself, if not to his Hearers: If he has Guilt upon him, if his Conscience is reproaching him, and if any ill Practices are putting a damp upon that good sense of Things, that makes his Thoughts *sparkle*, upon

upon other occaſions, and gives him an Air and Authority, a Tone of Aſſurance, and a Freedom of Expreſſion.

Such a Method as I have been opening, has had great Succeſs with all thoſe that I have known to have tried it. And tho every one has not that ſwiftneſs of Imagination, nor that clearneſs of Expreſſion, that others may have, ſo that in this Men may differ as much as they do in their written Compoſitions; yet every Man by this Method may riſe far above that which he could ever have attained to any other way: It will make even exact Compoſitions eaſier to him, and him much readier and freer at them. But great care muſt be uſed by him, before he ſuffers himſelf to ſpeak with the liberty here aimed at in publick; he muſt try himſelf at ſmaller Excurſions from his fixed Thoughts, eſpecially in the Applicatory part, where Flame and Life are more neceſſary, and where a miſtaken Word, or an unfiniſhed Period are leſs obſerved, and ſooner forgiven, than in the Explanatory part, where Men ought to ſpeak more ſeverely. And as one ſucceeds in ſome ſhort Excurſions, he may give himſelf a farther Scope; and ſo by a long practice, he will at laſt arrive at ſo great

an eaſineſs, both in thinking and ſpeaking, that a very little Meditation will ſerve to lay open a Text to him, with all the Matter that belongs to it, together with the order in which it ought to be both explained and applied. And when a Man has attained to a tolerable degree in this, he is then the *Maſter* of his Buſineſs; he is *Maſter* alſo of much Time, and of many noble Thoughts, and Schemes that will ariſe out of them.

This I ſhall proſecute no further; for if this opening of it, does not excite the Reader to follow it a little, no enlargements I can offer upon it, will work upon him. But to return to *Preaching*, and ſo conclude this Chapter. He that intends truly to *preach the Goſpel*, and not himſelf; he that is more concerned to do good to others, than to raiſe his own Fame, or to procure a following to himſelf, and that makes this the meaſure of all his Meditations and Sermons, that he may put things in the beſt Light, and recommend them with the moſt advantage to his People; that reads the Scriptures much, and meditates often upon them; that prays earneſtly to God for direction in his Labours, and for a Bleſſing upon them; that directs his chief endeavours

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to the moſt important, and moſt indiſpenſible, as well as the moſt undeniable Duties of Religion; and chiefly to the inward Reformation of his Hearers Hearts, which will certainly draw all other leſſer Matters after it; and that does not ſpend his Time, nor his Zeal, upon leſſer or diſputable Points; this Man ſo made, and ſo moulded, cannot miſcarry in his Work: He will certainly ſucceed to ſome degree, *The Word ſpoken by him, ſhall not return again.* He ſhall have his *Crown*, and his *Reward* from his *Labours:* And to ſay all that can be ſaid, in one Word, with St. *Paul*, *He ſhall both ſave himſelf, and them that hear him.*

The CONCLUSION.

I have now gone over all that ſeemed to me moſt important upon this Head, *of the Paſtoral Care*, with as much Shortneſs and Clearneſs as I could: ſo now I am to conclude. The *Diſcourſe* may juſtly ſeem imperfect, ſince I ſay nothing concerning the Duties incumbent on *Biſhops*. But I will upon this occaſion ſay very little on that Head. The Poſt I am in, gives me a Right to teach *Prieſts* and *Deacons* their *Duty*; therefore I thought, that

without any great Preſumption, I might venture on it: but I have been too few Years in the *higher Order*, to take upon me to *teach* them, from whom I ſhall ever be ready to *learn*. This is certain, that ſince, as was formerly ſaid, the Inferiour *Orders* ſubſiſt in the *Superiour*, *Biſhops* muſt ſtill be under all the Obligations of *Prieſts*: They are then, take the Matter at loweſt, bound to live, to labour, and to preach as well as they. But why are they raiſed to a higher Rank of Dignity and Order, an encreaſe of Authority, and an Extent of Cure? And why have Chriſtian Princes and States, given them great Revenues, and an Acceſſion of Secular Honours? All this muſt certainly import their Obligation to *labour* more eminently, and to lay themſelves out more entirely in the *Work of the Goſpel*: in which, if the greateſt Encouragements and Aſſiſtances, the higheſt Dignities and Priviledges, belong to them, then according to our Saviour's Example and Deciſion, *who came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter*; and who declared, that *he who is firſt ſhall be laſt*, and *he who is the greateſt muſt be the Servant of all*; then I ſay, the higher that any are raiſed in this Miniſtry, they ought to lay themſelves out the more

more entirely in it, and labour the more abundantly. And as our Obligations to *Chriſt* and his *Church*, tie us to a greater Zeal and Diligence, and to a more conſtant Application of our Care and Thoughts; ſo the *Secular Supports* of our *Honours* and *Revenues* were given us to enable us to go through with that extent of *Care* and *Juriſdiction* that lies upon us. We are not only *Watchmen* to *watch* over the *Flock*, but likewiſe over the *Watchmen* themſelves. We keep the *Door* of the *Sanctuary*, and will have much to anſwer for, if through our Remiſsneſs or feeble Eaſineſs, if by truſting the Examination of thoſe we ordain to others, and yielding to Interceſſion and Importunity, we bring any into the *Service of the Church*, who are not duly qualified for it. In this, we muſt harden our ſelves, and become inexorable, if we will not partake in other Mens Sins, and in the Miſchiefs that theſe may bring upon the Church. It is a falſe Pity, and a cruel Compaſſion, if we ſuffer any Conſiderations to prevail upon us in this Matter, but thoſe which the Goſpel directs. The longer that we know them before we *ordain* them, the more that we ſift them, and the greater

variety of Trials, through which we make them paſs, we do thereby both ſecure the Quiet of our own Conſciences the more, as well as the Dignity of holy Things, and the true *Intereſt* of *Religion* and the *Church:* for theſe two *Intereſts* muſt never be ſeparated; they are but *one* and the *ſame* in themſelves; and *what God has joined together, we muſt never ſet aſunder.*

We muſt be ſetting conſtantly before our *Clergie*, their Obligations to the ſeveral Parts of their Duty; we muſt lay theſe upon them, when we *inſtitute* or collate them to *Churches*, in the ſolemneſt Manner, and with the weightieſt Words we can find. We muſt then lay the Importance of the Care of Souls before them, and *adjure* them as they will *anſwer to God* in the *great* Day, in which we muſt *appear* to *witneſs* againſt them, that they will ſeriouſly conſider and obſerve their *Ordination-Vows*, and that they will apply themſelves wholly to that *one Thing*. We muſt keep an Eye upon them continually; and be applying Reproofs, Exhortations, and Encouragements, as occaſion offers: We muſt enter into all their Concerns, and eſpouſe every Inte-

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reſt of that Part of the Church that is aſſigned to their *Care:* We muſt ſee them as oft as we can, and encourage them to come frequently to us; and muſt live in all things with them, *as a Father with his Children.* And that every thing we ſay to ſtir them up to their *Duty*, may have its due weight, we muſt take care ſo to order our ſelves, that they may evidently ſee, that we are careful to do our *own.* We muſt enter into all the Parts of the Worſhip of God with them; not thinking our ſelves too good for any piece of Service that may be done; viſiting the Sick, admitting poor and indigent Perſons, or ſuch as are troubled in mind, to come to us; Preaching oft, Catechiſing and Confirming frequently; and living in all things like Men that ſtudy to *fulfil their Miniſtry, and to do the Work of Evangeliſts.*

There has been an Opinion of late, much favoured by ſome *great Men* in our *Church*; that *the Biſhop is the ſole Paſtor of his whole Dioceſs*; that the Care of all the Souls is ſingly in him, and that all the *Incumbents*, in Churches, are only his *Curates* in the different parts of his *Pariſh*, which was the Ancient Deſigna-

tion of his Dioceſs. I know there are a great many Paſſages brought from *Antiquity* to favour this: I will not enter into the Queſtion, no not ſo far as to give my own Opinion of it. This is certain, that ſuch as are perſuaded of it, ought thereby to conſider themſelves as under very great and ſtrict Obligations, to conſtant Labour and Diligence; otherwiſe, it will be thought, that they only favour this Opinion, becauſe it encreaſes their *Authority*, without conſidering that neceſſary Conſequence that follows upon it.

But I will go no further on this Subject, at this time, having ſaid ſo much only, that I may not ſeem to fall under that heavy Cenſure of our Saviour's, with relation to the Scribes and Phariſees, *That they did bind heavy Burdens, and grievous to be born, upon others; and laid them upon Mens Shoulders, when they themſelves would not move them with one of their Fingers.* I muſt leave the whole Matter with my Readers. I have now laid together with great Simplicity what has been the chief Subject of my Thoughts for above *thirty Years*. I was formed to them by a *Biſhop* that had the greateſt Elevation of Soul, the largeſt compaſs of Knowledg, the

moſt

moſt mortified and moſt heavenly Diſpoſition, that I ever yet ſaw in *Mortal*; that had the greateſt Parts as well as Vertues, with the perfecteſt Humility that I ever ſaw in Man; and had a *ſublime* Strain in *Preaching*, with ſo grave a Geſture, and ſuch a Majeſty both of Thought, of Language, and of Pronunciation, that I never once ſaw a wandring Eye where he preached; and have ſeen whole Aſſemblies often *melt in Tears* before him; and of whom, I can ſay with great truth, that in a free and frequent Converſation with him, for above two and twenty Years, I never knew him ſay an *idle Word*, that had not a direct Tendency to *Edification:* and I never once ſaw him in any other Temper, but that which I wiſhed to be in, in the laſt Minutes of my Life. For that Pattern which I ſaw in him, and for that Converſation which I had with him, I know how much I have to anſwer to God: and though my reflecting on that which I knew in him, gives me juſt cauſe of being *deeply humbled* in my ſelf, and before God; yet I feel no more ſenſible Pleaſure in any thing, than in going over in my Thoughts all that I ſaw and obſerved in him.

I have alſo another Reaſon, that has determined me at this time, to prepare this Diſcourſe, and to offer it to the Publick; from the preſent poſture of our Affairs. We are now brought very near the greateſt *Criſis* that ever *Church* or *Nation* had. And as on the one Hand, if God ſhould ſo far puniſh us for our Sins, for our Contempt of his Goſpel, and *Neglect* of our *Duties*, as to deliver us over to the Rage of our Enemies; we have nothing to look for, but a *Perſecution* more dreadful than any is in Hiſtory: So if God hears our Prayers, and gives us a happy Iſſue out of all thoſe Dangers, with which the Malice of our Enemies threaten us; we have in view the greateſt Proſpect of a bleſſed and laſting Settlement, that even our Wiſhes can propoſe to us. Now nothing can ſo certainly avert the one, or prepare us to glorify God in it, if he in his Juſtice and Wiſdom ſhould call us to a Fiery *Trial* of our *Faith*, and *Patience*; as the ſerious minding of our Functions, of our Duties and Obligations, the confeſſing of our Sins, and the correcting of our Errors. We ſhall be very unfit to *ſuffer* for our *Religion*, much leſs to *die* for it, and very little

tle able to endure the hardſhips of *Perſecution*, if our Conſciences are reproaching us all the while, that we have procured theſe Things to our ſelves; and that by the ill uſe of our Proſperity, and other Advantages, we have kindled a Fire to conſume us. But as we have good Reaſon from the preſent State of Affairs, as well as from the many eminent Deliverances, and happy Providences, which have of late, in ſo ſignal a manner, watched over and protected us, to hope that God according to the Riches of his *Mercy*, and for the *Glory* of his *Great Name*, will hear the Prayers that many good Souls offer up, rather than the Cry of thoſe Abominations that are ſtill among us: So nothing can ſo certainly haſten on the fixing of our Tranquillity, and the compleating our Happineſs, as our lying often between the Porch and the Altar, and interceding with God for our People; and our giving our ſelves wholly to the Miniſtry of the Word of God, and to Prayer. Theſe being then the ſureſt Means, both to procure and to eſtabliſh to us, all thoſe great and glorious Things that we pray and hope for; this ſeemed to me a very proper Time to publiſh a Diſcourſe of this Nature. But

But that which made it an Act of *Obedience*, as well as *Zeal*, was the Authority of my *Moſt Reverend Metropolitan*; who, I have reaſon to believe, employs his Time and Thoughts, chiefly to conſider what may yet be wanting to give our *Church* a greater Beauty and Perfection; and what are the moſt proper Means both of purifying and uniting us. To which I thought nothing could ſo well prepare the way, as the offering to the Publick a plain and full Diſcourſe of the *Paſtoral Care*, and of every Thing relating to it. *His Grace* approved of this, and deſired me to ſet about it: Upon theſe Motives I writ it, with all the Simplicity and Freedom that I thought the Subject required, and ſent it to him; by whoſe particular *Approbation* I publiſh it, as I writ it at his *Direction*.

There is indeed one of my Motives that I have not yet mentioned, and on which I cannot enlarge ſo fully as I well might. But while we have ſuch an invaluable and unexampled Bleſſing, in the *Perſons* of thoſe *Princes* whom God hath ſet over us; if all the Conſiderations which ariſe out of the Deliverances that God has given us by *their* Means, of the

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Protection we enjoy under *them*, and of the great hopes we have of *them*: If, I ſay, all this does not oblige us, to ſet about the reforming of every Thing that may be amiſs or defective among us, to ſtudy much, and to labour hard; to lead ſtrict and exemplary Lives, and ſo to ſtop the Mouths, and overcome the Prejudices, of all that divide from us; this will make us look like a Nation caſt off and *forſaken of God*, which is *nigh unto curſing*, and *whoſe end is burning*. We have reaſon to conclude, that our preſent Bleſſings are the laſt Eſſays of God's Goodneſs to us, and that if we bring forth no Fruit under theſe, the next Sentence ſhall be, *Cut it down, why cumbreth it the Ground?* Theſe Things lie heavy on my Thoughts continually, and have all concurred to draw this Treatiſe from me; which I have writ with all the ſincerity of Heart, and purity of Intention, that I ſhould have had, if I had known that I had been to die at the Concluſion of it, and to anſwer for it to God.

To him I humbly offer it up, together with my moſt earneſt Prayers, That the Deſign here ſo imperfectly offered at, may

may become truly effectual, and have its full Progress and Accomplishment; which whensoever I shall see, I shall then with Joy, say, *Nunc Dimittis, &c.*

FINIS.

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